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GULF COAST HISTORY *and* GUIDE

BOOK ONE · · · TO THE CLOSING OF THE FRENCH PERIOD

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AMICHEL.

A NARRATIVE HISTORY OF THE GULF COAST

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DEDICATION

To those intrepid ones, all, of the vision and the dream, who led the way, undaunted by failure or disaster; who kept the faith, won to ultimate success, and left the triumphant realities of today for our attaining.

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Foreword

There is no part of North America the history of which is so involved, has remained so obscure, and is so little known, as that of the Gulf Coast between Tampa, Florida, and Tampico, Mexico, the territory which first was known as Amichel.

No other region has had its discovery so gratuitously accredited to a certain nation without sound evidence or logic to support such credit. No other important river has had its discovery so frequently ascribed to the wrong navigator as has the Mississippi. In no other part of the Western Hemisphere is there a state over which the flag of Spain has flown six times, that of France twice, England's once, that of the Confederacy once, and that of the United States four times—in all, fourteen changes of sovereignty; nowhere else in all the Americas are there two sections over which six different flags have flown.

No other portion of North America has attracted the political attention of as many European powers as has the Gulf Coast, for it is tributary to eight-tenths of the country east of the Rocky Mountains, below Canada, and waterways were once the only highways; hence, no other part of North America was as important to the rest, economically and strategically during the struggle for ownership; and no other part was as important as Amichel to the United States during its efforts to become a nation with a secure existence.

Notwithstanding this, there is no book to which one can turn for answers to many of the question frequently asked regarding the early, middle and late history of the Gulf Coast. To find these answers one must read many books on special districts or subjects—and these often disagree in their statements and opinions; one must search among musty achives, study old maps, and consult fast-disappearing old inhabitants for facts and color.

No wonder, then, that Americans in general, and even the residents of the district, know but little—and that little,

confusedly—concerning the history and romance of that part of their country which, for many years, meant "sink or swim" to the United States.

A misconception concerning French Louisiana is that it was founded by continental Frenchmen. Actually, Louisiana owes her establishment and development to Canadian French subjects, people vastly different in many respects from continental Frenchmen. These Canadians were a hardy, undaunted race, one or more generations removed from French environment and influence, educated and inured to life among the Indians of America, independent, resourceful and self-reliant, even in a wilderness. It was they who furnished initiative and sound judgment.

Could France have accomplished anything in Louisiana without Joliet; the four Lemoyne brothers—Iberville, Bienville, Serigny and Chateaugay; the three Chauvin brothers—de Lery, Beaulieu and Lafreniere; Lesueur; Dutisne; the Noyans, and St. Denys—All inseparable from, and indispensable to, Louisiana history?

In this matter, Joliet was the first Canadian of importance; he descended the Mississippi river in 1673, blazing the trail, so to speak, for La Salle, who later claimed the country for France.

La Salle, born a continental Frenchman, possessed the courage and will of a great leader, but, was proud and taciturn and lacked the tact necessary for leadership. Through lack of co-operation between himself and Beaugeau, the commander of the ships of La Salle's expedition, he sailed far beyond the Mississippi river on which he had intended to establish a post, and landed within little more than two hundred miles of Mexico —and Beaugeau was only half to blame for this.

The post which La Salle attempted to establish did not survive, nor did its founder, who was shot by a member of his own party, nor did his venture definitely secure Texas for France.

On the other hand, Iberville, a Canadian, who made the next attempt to colonize Louisiana, had the respect and co-operation of Chasteaumorant, the commander of his vessels, as well as the good will and confidence of all the other members of his party

Iberville succeeded in finding the Mississippi when he sought it, and the colony which he established did survive. Bienville, his brother, founded Mobile, Natchez and New Orleans, and these survived. St. Denys, related to Iberville by marriage, founded Natchitoches, and it survived.

When the Company of the West offered lots in the proposed city of New Orleans, and lands in the neighborhood, to those who would improve them, the Canadian Chauvins were prompt in making application for both, as the date of their concessions proves—November 28, 1719.

Leaving their companions on the coast, these brothers acquired three of the first five privately owned lots in New Orleans, the other two belonging not to pioneers but to agents Delorme and Chastang, sent there by the company. This was when Pailloux and his convict laborers had been able to clear a space of only four squares at the lower end of the future city. Pauger had not yet drawn a plan for the original French Quarter nor had he run a line.

The Chauvins also were among the first to succeed as planters and stock raisers in Louisiana. In choosing land for their plantations they showed their good judgment by settling on the high ground above Nine Mile Point near New Orleans, where the elevations along the Mississippi and the now-vanished Shupic Atcha rivers converged, forming a slight elevation that was seldom overflowed. One of the brothers, Beaulieu, also took up a tract extending northward from the Shupic Atcha nearly to Lake Pontchartrain, along the western side of what is now the New Basin Canal, an enlargement of Beaulieu's old drainage canal in which he floated logs to his sawmill near its southern end. Records indicate that this was the first sawmill located near old New Orleans. Reference to the map of August, 1722, will show where these concessions were located.

Dutisne, another Canadian, examplified the bravery and hardihood of those men. While at Dauphin Island, before the establishment of New Orleans, he purchased a compass and, accompanied by fourteen other Canadians, made his long way through the Indian country from Mobile to Quebec, returning with his family to New Orleans in 1722. It was he who built the fort at Natchitoches, and it was he who held that fort against Spanish opposition in the absence of St. Denys, the picturesque

Canadian trader and soldier who had founded the post.

St. Denys, besieged in that fort by overwhelming numbers of Indians, just after their massacre of the French at Natchez, in 1729, bravely sallied out with his little garrison; and so fierce was his attack upon the recently victorious Indians that they fled in disorder.

Bancroft writes: "The most successful colonists of Louisiana were the hardy emigrants from Canada who brough with them little beyond a staff and the coarse clothes that covered them."

Yet, set as high in office as any of the Canadians, and above most of them. were continental Frenchmen like Cadillac, visionary, obstinate and pessimistic; Hubert. unwise and obstructive; de La Tour, whose judgment suggested keeping the capital at Biloxi, where the French had met with so much disaster; Perier, cruel and faithless toward the Indians and the sponsor of Chepart, who was stupid, brutal and avaricious and usually drunk, and whom Perier selected for command at Natchez against the advice of the inhabitants; and Governors Vaudreuil and Kerlerec, more intent on introducing the pomp of high Parisian society into the little, new wilderness settlement called New Orleans, with its eight hundred inhabitants of most diverse backgrounds, than on furthering the success of the province.

To such men France gave authority; and she hampered even them by dictating from afar such small details as how many locksmiths and wigmakers the province should have.

When these inept and hampered officials failed to get fortunate results, or, worse still, brought disaster upon the settlers, the stockholders of the company, and even themselves, it was customary for France to recall these officials to stand trial before a court-martial; but that did not mend matters in the colony.

In the face of these entirely unnecessary difficulties, heaped by native Frenchmen upon natural obstacles that were unavoidable, the Canadians won through.

Much of the romance and atmosphere of old New Orleans is derived from the influence of these men of the North and their descendents, and particularly to Jean Baptiste Lemoyne de Bienville, the Canadian founder of New Orleans.

INDIAN HUNTING MASK

I

Discovery of the Gulf Coast

Who was the first European to set eyes or feet upon the lands that are washed by the Gulf of Mexico along its northern shore? What was his nationality, and in what year did those things occur?

Most of us think immediately of Don Ponce de Leon, Pineda or De Soto; but the coast of Florida, and part of the Gulf Coast west of Florida, had been mapped for more than twelve years before Ponce de Leon arrived on the Florida shore in 1513; and he, of course, was years ahead of Pineda and De Soto. The real discovery was made shortly before the year 1500.

We must go back a hundred years before that time if we are to understand what remarkable influence it was that led up to, encouraged, and made possible, the progress in nautical science that resulted suddenly in the discovery of equatorial and South Africa, the islands of the Atlantic, and the Americas, all within the brief space of some fifty years. We will see that the credit is due chiefly to one nation, influenced and taught by one man.

In 1394, to King John of Portugal and his queen Philippa, a son was born who was to be known as Prince Henry the Navigator. As a man he was big of frame, strong-limbed, tanned and severe in appearance, though most of his severity he directed toward himself. He was temperate and chaste, with a clean mind and tongue; and at the age of twenty-one was knighted for valor in the holy war battle with the Moors at the capture of Ceuta. Later he was made Grand Master of the Order of Christ.

As two older brothers stood between him and the throne Henry gave his attention almost exclusively to the study of the mathematical sciences and navigation. Intending to devote his life to the exploration of the unknown lands and seas to the

south he retired to Sagres, in the southwest corner of Portugal, where he erected an observatory and established a school of navigation and map-making.

In his school were trained the most intelligent, enterprising and daring navigators of Europe; and their discoveries, under his tutelage and inspiration, startled the world.

Before Henry's day Cape Nam (now Cape Nun) on the northwest coast of Africa at about 8° 45′ north latitude, had been thought to be the end of the world. Even the people of Henry's day believed that the sun's heat beyond this cape was so intense that the sea boiled, and that terrible monsters infested it. But in the face of these imagined dangers Henry's captains, during his life, ventured farther each year until they had reached to within a few degrees of the equator; and, while cruising about in the waters west of Portugal, they discovered several of the Azores, a third of the way across the Atlantic Ocean.

Henry died in the year 1460; but under the patronage of the Portuguese throne he lived on, in the work of his captains; and the whole western coast of Africa was explored. When Diaz, also a Portuguese, discovered its southern cape and rounded it the Portuguese expected so much benefit from the finding of this route to the Far East that they called it "The Cape of Good Hope."

Vasco da Gama, another Portuguese, sailing even farther than had Diaz, established on the southern coast of India the first European colony in the Far East.

Not contented with these achievements, the Portuguese later on turned their attention westward, passed the Azores, found the major portions of both continents of America, discovered another cape — the South American — doubled it, crossed the Pacific Ocean and circled the globe—all within sixty years after Henry's death. Certainly the Portuguese were then the undisputed masters of the navigating world; and Prince Henry's efforts had succeeded far beyond the reach of his own imagination.

Next to the Portuguese, as mariners, came the Italians, who, with their background of Roman achievement, plus Portuguese training and inspiration, gained renown and acclaim for themselves and the countries for which they sailed. Christopher Columbus was one of them.

Twenty-two years before Columbus discovered land in the West he had journeyed from Italy to Portugal to join his brother Bartholomew, who was a map-maker in Lisbon. Christopher remained with the Portuguese for fourteen years, spending part of the time in exploring the African coast under one of Henry's captains.

He married the daughter of Perestrelo, a distinguished Portuguese captain; and this gave him access to the valuable papers and charts of his deceased father-in-law.

From these facts we may see that he drew his information, training and inspiration entirely from Portuguese sources.

But Columbus had no money; and when the idea struck him and he determined to set out in search of a western passage to India it took him eight years to find someone who would back him in such an enterprise. The hitch came, it seems, in his demanding not only financial backing but the promise of a royal reward in case he succeeded.

On these terms he offered his services first to Portugal; but the Portuguese had competent captains of their own nationality who were willing to go in search of new routes and new lands just for the interest and excitement of such a venture and the chance of profit, and who were willing to leave the matter of royal rewards to the discretion of their ruler; so Columbus' offer was declined, and the Portuguese king is accused of, and criticized for, having secretly sent another on the same mission. Surely he was at liberty to do so if he wished when Columbus stipulated terms that were not acceptable; and surely too he could do so without violating any confidences; Columbus, after acquiring all his knowledge and training among the Portuguese, was probably unable to tell the king anything new or even suggest an idea that had not occurred long since to these people who had been adventuring across unknown seas for many years.

Some have claimed that this secret attempt ended in failure—and perhaps it did; but that was not the only Portuguese effort in a westerly direction, as we shall see.

Columbus next offered his services to bankrupt Spain and received but little encouragement at first. However, the success of her neighbor Portugal, through her maritime ventures, at last suggested to Spain a way out of her own financial difficulties.

Through the influence of two of her ministers of finance Queen Isabella was prevailed upon to gamble on Columbus and to attempt something that was new to her and to Spain. It was neither scientific nor religious zeal that decided her, but her ministers of finance at a time when Spain was in sore need of money. Expense might be saved, or even money made, if a western water route to he Land of Spices could be found which would be shorter than the eastern route discovered by the Portuguese.

We know that such a route was not found; but the daring of the Italian Columbus, his faith, fortitude and genius were rewarded in 1492 by the finding of islands hitherto unknown; and the credit for the discovery of the western hemisphere went to him—and to Spain.

Amerigo Vespucci was another Italian who gained renown through Portuguese and Italian training. He was a ship chandler, or something of the sort, in Spain and became acquainted with Columbus while fitting out the latter for one of his voyages. Vespucci made his first crossing of the Atlantic with Columbus. What his occupation was on shipboard we do not know; he may have been in charge of the supplies, for he evidently knew something about such things; but up to that time, so far as is known, he had had no training in navigation.

As there are no records to prove that he ever commanded an expedition in any direction, and as nearly all that we know of him is from his own letters about what he did, where he went, and what he saw, we may believe in him or not, as we choose; but if we accept what he writes as true, he became a very great mariner. The point is that if he did so he was indebted to Columbus for his training in navigation and map making; and Columbus, as we have seen, was indebted to the Portuguese for his training and experiences.

Amerigo, according to his letters, sailed in 1500 with a Portuguese captain named Cabral who commanded an expedition for the Portuguese king. This expedition chanced on the coast of South America. A year later Amerigo returned there for the purpose of making further explorations. This time he claims to have been the navigator for a Portuguese venture.

The hitherto unknown things which he saw induced him to write of the country as "a new world." He referred, of course,

to South America and not to Cuba, which was thought then to be a part of India, nor to North America, upon which continent he had not set foot.

The map-makers of Europe thereafter depicted the explored part of South America as "the 'New World' of Amerigo." Afterward, when the region was given the name Brazil, the map-makers applied those words to other discovered parts of South America and, finally, to all new lands as they were discovered in the West. Waldseemuller, in 1507, was the first to use the name America.

This is how the new world came to be called America; in honor of a man who owed his knowledge to the Portuguese, first indirectly and then directly; a man who, when he first saw the new world, was in Portuguese employ and under the command of a Portuguese —Cabral.

The Cabots (Cabotos), too, were Italians; one of them in English employ, the other sailing later for Spain.

Verrazano, who has been credited with having discovered the lower Atlantic coast of North America while in French employ, also was an Italian.

Magailhees—or Magellan, as the English and French called him—was a Portuguese of high birth, who did his first sailing for his own country. He was the greatest sailor of them all; for it was an expedition under his command that in 1520 discovered the South American Horn, passed through the straits, made the first crossing of the Pacific Ocean, and reached home by going entirely around the world—though Magellan did not live to see the end of the voyage.

Joao Vaz Cortereal, still another distinguished Portuguese mariner, was made governor of the island of Terceira as a reward for his discoveries "in the West." Three sons, Vasqueanes, Gaspar and Miguel, followed in his footsteps.

Shortly before the year 1500 Gaspar sailed into the West. It is not recorded officially just where he went; but the southern route to America was by then rather well known, Columbus having made several trips, and it is likely he took that course.

When Gaspar and his men returned to Portugal there was talk of **a continent and islands** which **they** had seen.

An Italian named Cantino happened to be in Lisbon at the

time and ordered a map of the new discoveries made for a friend in Italy. This map is known as the "Cantino Map," and, though undated, the letters of Cantino to his friend, concerning his order for the map and the forwarding of it, establish its approximate date.

The point is that this is the first map, the date of which is fixed within narrow limits, that shows the peninsula of Florida with a part of the **Gulf Coast** to the west and a part of the Atlantic coast running well to the north; and it antedates any Spanish map of the region by nineteen years.

As these voyages of the Cortereals were not under the auspices of their government but were financed by themselves, Portuguese archives furnish us no additional information or proofs that Gaspar was the actual discoverer of the Gulf Coast. Furthermore, these new lands lay so far west as to be beyond the Portuguese zone of discovery, as defined by the Pope, and were in that of Spain. The discovery thus meant nothing to Portugal, the Cortereals having been trespassers in that region. This may further account for our finding no mention of Gaspar's discovery in Portuguese archives; it may be noted, too, that the Portuguese archives fell, shortly afterwards, into the hands of Spain.

But we believe that the Cantino map, discovered many years later in Italy, is sufficient proof that Gaspar was the discoverer of the Gulf Coast. Humboldt considered it as such.

It appears very certain that the Spaniards did not know about the Gulf Coast in 1500 because Spanish maps of that time, and for years afterwards, showed nothing of the sort; in fact, they showed only the eastern end of Cuba, which they, and Columbus too, thought was a part of India; Yucatan was shown as an **island.** Portuguese maps, to the contrary, showed Cuba correctly as an island and Yucatan a peninsula.

Considering these vital evidences, and the fact that the great mariners were either Portuguese or Italians, there seems no reason to believe, like Harrisse, that the Gulf Coast was "probably discovered by a Spaniard."

It would be equally unreasonable to believe that a Spanish discoverer of the northern coast of the Gulf would allow his own king to remain ignorant of it and carry such news to Portugal instead, where Cantino could hear of it in 1500. The proof

that the Spanish king was not informed is evidenced by his issuance of commissions to Ponce de Leon and Francisco de Garay, both Spaniards, to go prospecting for an island called Bimini in that direction, and for a passage to Cathay. Even in 1521, the year in which Don Ponce died, he believed that Florida was an island.

In 1519 Pineda, sailing for Spain, had found Florida to be a peninsula—nineteen years after the Cantino map had been made in Portugal.

In view of all these facts we would say that the Gulf Coast was **not** discovered by a Spaniard; Florida was not discovered by Ponce de Leon, and the lower Atlantic coast was not discovered by Verrazano.

Immediately after his first trip Gaspar Cortereal set sail again, this time for the "Northwest." He returned in 1501 and was off again at once in the same direction; he wasted but little time in port.

On this third attempt he reached North America with three ships. After appointing a rendezvous each ship sailed to explore in a different direction. Gaspar failed to return to the appointed place and was never again heard of.

Thereupon his brother Miguel fitted out three ships in Portugal and sailed in search of Gaspar. His three ships reached the American coast and, after appointing a rendezvous, separated for the search. This time Miguel failed to return and was never again heard of.

The third brother, Vasqueanes, then prepared to go in search of the other two; but the King of Portugal said that he would not permit another of the illustrious family to risk himself where two already had been lost.

What became of Gaspar and Miguel? There can be little doubt that they knew of the lands lying on the Gulf, and shown on the Cantino map, where the climate was warmer and food more plentiful than in the North. Did either or both of them reach it only to come to grief from storms in the shallow waters along the Gulf Coast? Or did they perhaps abandon ship on the Atlantic coast, for some sufficient reason, and make their way overland to the South?

However that may be, and regardless of what became of them, it may be interesting to know that on the Gulf Coast there is a place that tradition tells us was once a "Portuguese field." The tradition comes down to us from the Spanish pilots of old, through their modern successors, the gulf pilots and schoonermen.

The "field" has grown up again in trees, during all these years, and would be difficult to find unless one had a hint as to where to look for it.

If you ask about the "field" now you will find but few who ever heard of it; and those will only remember having heard it spoken of by a father or grandfather "who was interested in such things." But south of Biloxi is a bar, called the "Old Field bar," which everyone does know since it has always been useful in navigating that part of Mississippi Sound. The eastern end of it lies along the channel from Ship Island, and in foggy weather the channel into Biloxi can be found by taking soundings along this bar with a pole; and in the days before lighthouses and beacons it served the same purpose on dark nights. Time has changed the coast line and the bars here very little; so the bar and its name have survived through the centuries, though the "field" from which it got its name has long since ceased to be a field.

It had faced the western end of the bar, with a frontage of about thirty-two hundred feet, just west of the Seashore Camp Grounds of today at Biloxi, Mississippi; and it was denuded of trees straight through from the beach to the Back Bay. The clean cut through the virgin forest was a landmark that could be seen from far out in the Gulf, and it was the only landmark in those days.

From the sea it is distinguishable even now by a slight dip in the tree line against the sky, with a few individual tree tops rising above the line here and there. On the land beside the "field" the trees are a little higher and make a straight, level growth, with no individual trees extending above. A closer inspection of the "field" shows the trees to be largely of different species from those on the adjoining land.

How long ago did this become a field, and when did it cease to be one? The age of the present trees means nothing because the ancient custom of hunters—first Indians, and then white

men—of setting woods fires to drive game, kept the fields open from the time they were cleared until the custom ceased locally with the peopling of the coast.

What could have been the cause, or object, of such a cut? None such was made elsewhere by Frenchman or Spaniard, nor even by a hurricane; and the spot was never granted to or occupied by anyone until recent years.

Did the lost Portuguese make the cut for a signal and burn the timber for signal fires in the hope of being found and rescued by Vasqueanes or another? Did the Spaniards instead discover and slaughter them as they did the French near St. Augustine? And how did the Spanish pilots come to know it as a **Portuguese** field?

With these facts to begin with perhaps others will be discovered in future, to prove a Portuguese occupation of the Gulf Coast, even if only temporary and unofficial, that antedated both the Spanish and French occupations by two hundred years.

Returning to the question at the beginning of this chapter, "Who discovered the Gulf Coast, and when," we may say with reasonable assurance that it was not a Spaniard but a Portuguese—most probably Gaspar Cortereal, shortly before the year fifteen hundred.

II

Early Spaniards on the Gulf Coast

When Queen Isabella had been laid to rest and Ferdinand had had another wife for seven years, and while the King of Spain and even the Spaniards in the West Indies were ignorant of the existence of the American continent that lay only a few miles to the northwest of the islands, Don Ponce de Leon was listening with eager ears to the stories which the native islanders told about a land they called Bimini in that direction; and of its wonderful fountain that conferred perpetual youth on those who bathed in, or drank, its waters.

In 1513 Don Ponce, having first obtained permission from Ferdinand, sailed northwest from Porto Rico to find this new land and its famed fountain. A storm sent him to the Atlantic shore of the peninsula, and he named the land Florida, perhaps for the profusion of beautiful flowers he had found, or because the day was Palm Sunday, which the Spaniards called Pasqua de Flores. Coasting southward he rounded the cape and discovered and named the Tortugas (Turtle) Islands. Then turning northward he continued his journey up the west side as far as Tampa Bay.

His lieutenant, Ortuba, appears to have sailed farther northward, and perhaps westward; but there is no record as to how far he went.

Don Ponce returned to Porto Rico in the same year.

Eight years later he once more set sail and landed in Florida —no one knows where—intending to establish a colony; but Indians attacked his party, and Ponce de Leon received a wound from which he died after returning to Porto Rico. To the day of his death he believed Florida to be an island.

Miruelo's trading voyage in 1516 which, available records indicate, took him from Cuba to Pensacola Bay, may have resulted

in spreading throughout the West Indies the knowledge that Florida was not an island.

Cordoba's ill-fated slaving expedition to Florida in 1517 probably added nothing to a knowledge of the coast as, on his way to Florida, a storm landed him at Yucatan instead; and when he decided to return to Cuba a second storm carried his battered flotilla to Florida. His party was attacked by Indians at both places, and Cordoba died of his wounds after returning to Cuba.

Alonzo Alvarez de Pineda, in 1519, was sent by Francisco de Garay, the Spanish Governor of Jamaica, to discover a strait that might permit of a western passage to the "Land of Spices." With four round-bottomed, light-draft vessels, called caravels he sailed up the western coast of Florida and westward along the Gulf Coast. Florida, as far north as Tampa Bay, nominally belonged to Ponce de Leon, but beyond that point Pineda took possession of the country for his king and Governor Garay.

Searching for a strait as he went along he finally arrived at Cape Rojo, just south of Tampico, Mexico, where he was turned back by Cortez, who had arrived the year before.

It is customary to credit Pineda with having discovered and entered the Mississippi River as he journeyed along the coast eastward; but there is nothing in his own story even to suggest that he did so.

He tells of having discovered a river of "very great volume" which was thereafter plotted on Spanish maps as the Espiritu Santo, and which, for some unaccountable reason, has been assumed by some to have been the Mississippi; but let us note his own description of it. He says that on its bank he found a considerable Indian town, at which he remained for forty days, trading with the Indians and careening his vessels. Farther up the river he found the banks so thickly inhabited that within the space of six leagues (eighteen miles) he counted no less than forty Indian villages.

We may say here that twenty-three years later De Soto was told by Indians that the lower banks of the Mississippi river were uninhabitable wastes. Furthermore, Spanish maps showed the Espiritu Santo emptying into an inland bay. The Mississippi, far from emptying into an inland bay, had, as we know, formed a delta extending into the gulf, giving it not one but a number of

outlets; and its marshy banks were unsuited to the careening of vessels.

The Mobile River, on the other hand, does empty into a bay; and on its shores there are suitable places for the careening of vessels; and the fact that many Indians did dwell on its banks is borne out by all early records. Pineda undoubtedly entered Mobile Bay and the Mobile River in search of a passage to the Land of Spices; but as for his having accidentally stumbled on the "Father of Waters" and having sailed up through one of its dangerous passes for a distance of eighteen or more miles, let us recall the experiences of others:

La Salle, though he later on descended the Mississippi to the Gulf and saw how it divides at that point into several passes, failed to discern those passes from the Gulf of Mexico on his next expedition, which was undertaken for that very purpose.

Iberville, on the same mission, never having seen the passes, mistook the mud-covered rubbish about the openings for a rocky shore and, but for a storm that was gathering at the moment, he gladly would have continued on his way. But, being threatened by the growing storm, he headed in toward land in desperation. Happily, what appeared to be rocks proved to be only mud-covered snags and trash through which flowed a pass of the river he sought.

So great were the dangers to navigation, from sandbars and snags, that for many years thereafter both French and Spanish pilots feared those waters. Fancy then a competent navigator like Pineda risking his chances of ever reaching home again by sailing in with his four caravels against the swift current of the Mississippi!

As for the "very great volume" of water which he reported: He also informed Garay that many of the natives whom he saw wore gold ornaments, and that among them were giants and pygmies. He even said that he discovered an inclination among them to be converted to the Church of Rome.

Evidently Pineda was trying to lighten Garay's disappointment at his failure to discover the passage he was sent to find. His invention of the gold ornaments may have been intended to suggest the possibility of finding gold mines in the new possession; the great number of Indian inhabitants would offer fine prospects for trade; the giants and pygmies would satisfy everyone's craving

for the marvelous; and he threw in the pious inclinations of the savages to gladden the heart of the good Catholic Governor. Pineda did his best; but he did not describe the Mississippi River.

Be all that as it may, what Pineda did do was to take possession of the whole country from Tampa, Florida, to Tampico, Mexico, for his king and Garay. Below Tampa lay the country of Don Ponce de Leon; and below Tampico lay the land of Cortez. To the whole intervening stretch of coast Garay gave its first recorded name — Amichel.

Narvaez, in 1528, landed an expedition consisting of four hundred men and eighty horses on the Florida coast at Apalachee Bay and set out to explore the interior. His eight-hundred-mile journey through the wildernesses of western Florida ended in nothing, somewhere east of Pensacola Bay. There he extemporized five boats, each thirty-three feet long, and in these the party coasted westward between St. Rose Island and the mainland, going ashore, wherever possible, to get food and water. Narvaez found the natives hostile; gone were those Indians with the pious leanings whom Pineda had reported only nine years before.

Continuing westward, on October thirty-first, the expedition came to and recognized **the current** of a river that poured such a volume of fresh water into the Gulf that it was fresh enough to drink. This was, without doubt, the Mississippi River. Narvaez could not have found such a current of fresh water elsewhere on the coast.

It seems, then, that he and his men were the first white people to drink the waters of the great river — more that ten years before De Soto actually saw it.

The boat which Narvaez sailed was driven to sea in a storm, and Narvaez perished. Three other boats made the shore in safety; but the fifth boat, which had held his friars, was driven ashore, bottom up, west of the river from which Narvaez had drunk.

After eight years of wandering in slavery among the Indians, four of the survivors, three white men and a Moorish Negro, made their way to San Miguel, in Sinaloa, on the Pacific side of Mexico. To one of them, Cabesa de Vaca, we are indebted for the account

of the expedition. Rescue ships searched vainly for a year along the coast for Narvaez and his company.

In 1539 we come to the famous expedition of Hernando de Soto, who had been with Pizarro in Peru assisting him in plundering and murdering the natives. De Soto had collected his share of the loot, and when the Spanish plunderers began to fall out among themselves he wisely returned to Spain. De Soto was then rich, but not, he thought, rich enough; he wished to eclipse Pizarro; and to that end he planned another expedition.

When he arrived in Spain the wealth that he displayed, the tales that he told, and his evident confidence in himself and his new project so crazed the people that many sold their homes, their tilled lands, olive orchards or whatever they had, in order to join him in his new enterprise. De Soto had started the first Florida boom.

When the time for embarkation came there were so many glittering knights waiting to go that De Soto could not take them all. He selected the best and left the others on the dock surrounded by the arms and equipment they had bought with the proceeds from the sale of all their wordly possessions.

Soon after their arrival on the Florida coast De Soto and his companions, with their taste for wanton killing and maiming, had so terrified the natives that upon the approach of the Spaniards papoose, squaw and brave fled from their Indian villages and remained hidden till De Soto had passed. Steel swords and lances, powder and ball, and mail-clad men on mail-clad horses (animals these Indians had never before seen) were far more than a match for naked Indian bodies and the primitive weapons with which they fought on foot. Even so, after landing at Tampa Bay and making a big circle north, west and south, through South Carolina, Georgia and Alabama, De Soto came to Mobile, where, in spite of their superior weapons and appointments, the Spaniards suffered severe losses in a fierce battle with the savages. So battered were the invaders after this fight that many wished to go home; but De Soto, hoping to recoup his shattered fortunes, could not be persuaded to do so, and led his reluctant followers inland.

This brought them to a village of the Chickasaws, the most warlike of the Southern Indians. The Spaniards drove them from

the village and occupied the Indian huts for the night. The Chickasaws returned, however, and set fire to the huts; and the invaders literally lost their shirts and most of their equipment and supplies. Thereafter the Spaniards were forced to resort to skins to cover their nakedness.

De Soto then led his party north and west, and in doing so earned his sole title to distinction—the chance discovery of the Mississippi River, the water of which Narvaez had discovered and drunk eleven years before; and although De Soto believed it was the Espiritu Santo, which Pineda had found a score of years before, he renamed it El Rio Grande de la Florida. As Pineda had discovered the Mobile and not the Mississippi, this was the first of the several European names the great river has borne.

After crossing the Mississippi with difficulty and wandering about on the west side of it for a while De Soto, with fortune and equipment gone, health and hope destroyed, and full of physical and mental wounds, laid himself down and died on May 21, 1542.

When they had buried their former leader his Spanish companions recalled that he had told the Indians he was immortal, hoping to awe them by playing upon their superstitions. What would be the effect if the Indians learned that De Soto was dead? When the Spaniards left their camp the Indians might discover and open the grave and find his body, and that might incline them to pursue the retreating expedition. Now that the Spaniards were reduced nearly to an equal footing with the savages they had lost all taste for further encounters with them. So, at night, they dug up De Soto's remains and sank them in the Mississippi River. This occurred near the mouth of Red River, or perhaps farther north.

Once rich with plunder, De Soto died possessed of little besides his horses and a few pigs. Had he lived but a few weeks more he probably would have left not even these.

His expedition had landed in Florida in silks and shining armor. During periods of rest the glittering array had whiled away the time in playing cards, and for sport they killed and maimed Indians; but wounded and sick now, and nearly without covering for their bodies, the survivors started, under the leadership of Luis Moscoso de Alverado, on the long overland journey to Mexico. Then, changing their minds, they returned to the banks

of the river and began the laborious job of building boats in which to escape downriver from the land they had come to plunder. In seven brigantines, which they built with much contriving, three hundred and twenty-odd Spaniards were chased downstream by perhaps a thousand Indians. Nearly every Spaniard received additional wounds, and about a dozen were drowned.

Upon nearing the Gulf the party landed with the object of obtaining a last supply of food and water. But here the Indians renewed their attack, and the Spaniards fled and made for the open Gulf.

Three hundred and eleven men found their way to Tampico, Mexico. Thus another Spanish expedition had returned from Amichel emptyhanded.

Thus ended what might be called the conquest of De Soto by Florida. His body was meanwhile rolling over somewhere near the bottom of the stream he had discovered.

Father Conca de Barbastro, in 1549, led an abortive and, to him and four of his companions, fatal missionary expedition to somewhere on the west coast of the Florida peninsula.

Tristan de Luna made an equally unsuccessful attempt to establish a colony on Pensacola Bay ten years later, an attempt which came to grief from internal dissension; but it is probable that neither of these last two expeditions added anything to the existing knowledge of the Gulf Coast.

For forty-seven years Spain had been sending men to Amichel for one purpose or another, but not one had succeeded. Traders, slavers, plunderers, colonizers and missionaries — all alike had failed. Spain did not know what to do with the country; so she abandoned it for the next hundred and thirty-seven years.

Toward the end of the sixteen-hundreds England, France and again Spain began to take an interest in the Gulf Coast — Spain, possibly because of pride, but more probably because Amichel adjoined, or was uncomfortably near, to her American possessions in Mexico and the West Indies, and lay inconveniently close to the ship lane used by her gold- and silver-laden galleons; England because she claimed all the country westward from her

colonies on the Atlantic; France because La Salle had claimed for her the midcountry down to the Gulf of Mexico; and both England and France largely because they were interested in those Spanish galleons and mines, as Spain well knew.

Spain, in 1696 (according to Spanish records), despatched Don Andre d'Arriola to the coast of Amichel to build that first little fort, San Carlos, at Pensacola. Iberville, for France, arrived there in January of 1699 and found the fort as yet uncompleted. The French therefore set the time of the arrival of the Spaniards at about October, 1698. Spain may have despatched Don Andre in 1696, but he evidently lingered over his departure; perhaps the experiences of his predecessors in Amichel justified a desire to linger.)

III

Spain and Portugal Hold the Americas

A glance at the history of Europe's maritime powers as they were at the end of the fifteenth century will suffice to explain why the Americas were left to Spain and Portugal alone for more than a hundred years.

In 1492, when America was discovered, Europe was just emerging from feudalism. Not yet had the great states which we know today emerged from the welter of principalities that scrambled and unscrambled themselves across the face of Europe. Intermarriages among the princely ruling families so complicated hereditary claims that no peaceful solution could be reached, and, instead of serving to bring about unity, these intermarriages developed wars when a petty ruler died or was murdered. Often such wars were confined to a region now bound within the confines of what is now a nation, and such little wars did not greatly concern Europe as a whole. But occasionally the claims of relatives crossed important borders, spread a war to a region where another language was spoken, and then men and treasure were destroyed on a large scale. As a consequence of these little and big wars Europe as a whole was kept poor, and as a consequence of the poverty the people were steeped in ignorance for centuries.

Italy, to a limited extent, may be excepted from this statement of European conditions, for there, in the course of time, the merchants had become rich through their trade with the Far East via Egypt. Wealthy and generous patrons encouraged education, and the fine arts flourished within the narrow limits set by the Church of Rome.

But Italy's political division made national expression impossible. Disunited since the fall of Rome, she offered such a poor picture of defense that Spain, France, Austria and smaller robbers and pirates did not hesitate to despoil her of land and to

attack her individual merchants, both overland and on the Mediterranean Sea. Under such circumstances there was no hope of gaining and holding any possessions across the Atlantic, even though her sailors were competent. For two thousand years those sailors had been navigating the coasts of the Mediterranean and the Atlantic, chiefly north of the Straits of Gibraltar; but as they were without navigating instruments, except the compass, until Prince Henry invented the astrolabe, they had never ventured far from land. At the time of the discovery of America it was not their fault that their country secured no share of the new world. After Prince Henry had taught them the use of the astrolabe and had spurred them on to venture ever farther into the unknown these Italian sailors roved the seven seas for centuries, but in the interest of countries other than their own; they established trading posts in the Orient and slave depots in Africa for Portugal, and in so doing they helped to make Portugal rich and their own Italy poorer, for the Portuguese took the Eastern trade away from the harassed Italian merchants. Thus Italy had no part in the discoveries or developments in world trade except through the reflected glory of her sons sailing under other flags.

About this time there was the beginning of a united Spain. Ferdinand, heir to the throne of Castile, married Isabella, heir to the throne of Aragon, uniting the two strongest states in Spain.

The first care of these monarchs upon coming to their thrones was to pull down the smaller rulers of the other provinces. To this end Ferdinand organized a brotherhood of militia among the provinces which he turned against the princes; then, under the guise of religion, Ferdinand and Isabella allied themselves with the Church to establish the "Holy Inquisition," a sort of national secret spy system like the Gestapo, conceived primarily for the purpose of eliminating all who were a danger either to the church or the crown. So fiendish were the tortures used to extract information and false confessions that Spain's best citizens fled the country—the Jews who were her best merchants, the Moors, her most skilled artisans, and the scholars whose enlightenment threatened the bigotry and superstitious ignorance on which the Church flourished. And so well did the Inquisition appear to work to the advantage of both parties thereto that it was con-

tinued for three hundred years, even though it drove out of Spain her best citizens.

By 1492 Spain was united; but the national treasury was empty.

Hoping to recoup her fortunes by establishing trade relations with the Far East over a new and shorter route than Portugal used, Spain sent forth Columbus in 1492. Soon, as we know, she built a fleeting greatness on treasure wrung from the peoples of Central and South America. Avarice, cruelty and deceit, supported by this vast new treasure, created for Spain a wide influence in Europe, extended her sea power, cemented her hold on her imperial possessions in the Americas and maintained a questionable greatness for three centuries. Eventually, however, the gold ran out, and her decadence as a world power became a certainty.

France, during the time of Columbus, was united under Louis XII, but weak. Struggles within the nation and wars with her neighbors had made her so. Affairs became even worse when Ferdinand of Spain betrayed Louis after the latter's attempt to wrest a province from Italy. Ferdinand helped Louis to conquer it but sent him home afterwards and kept the province for himself. For many decades the French treasury showed no improvement, and it was 1604 before France made a definite effort to colonize America. In that year Champlain founded Quebec.

England, in the time of Columbus, was ruled by Henry VII, who had no disposition to risk any of his carefully hoarded money on expeditions into the unknown West. He preferred to get his gold through intrigue.

To this end he arranged a marriage between his eldest son and Ferdinand's daughter Catherine, who brought a rich dowry to England; and when the young prince had the misfortune to die before the wedding, and there was danger of the dowry being taken back to Spain, Henry quickly engaged his next son, aged thirteen, to the bereaved Catherine and rescued the dowry. This second son was one day to become Henry VIII.

Another of Henry VII's bizarre economic intrigues was his engagement of himself to Catherine's demented sister Joanna, who as the widow of Philip of Austria, had inherited the Netherlands as well as Philip's Austrian possessions, and, as the daughter of

Isabella, had inherited Aragon as well. Henry was willing to become his little son's brother-in-law and to overlook the sad mental condition of his prospective bride and her unfortunate habit of carrying about with her, wherever she went, the body of her formerly handsome husband Philip; but Henry's sudden death put an end to this macabre political-financial romance.

Near the end of the fifteenth century, while Henry VII was still alive, an Italian family named Caboto moved to Bristol, England, from the neighborhood of Genoa, Italy. This family later added the names of John and Sebastian Cabot to the long list of famous Italian mariners.

John Cabot approached Henry with an offer to head an expedition to find land in the West and claim it for England. Though Henry was willing to share in the profits of such a venture he was unwilling to bear the expense; so he offered to lend John a ship if John would pay his own expenses and agree to give Henry a fifth of the profits, if any resulted from the venture. He also promised John a pension, which his good subjects of Bristol would have to pay.

John sailed in 1497 and reached the American coast somewhere in the neighborhood of what is now Labrador.

Even though this land lay in the zone which the Pope had set aside for Spain, and although England did nothing more about it for ninety years, John Cabot's discovery was made the basis of England's future claim to the North American continent.

In 1584 Sir Walter Raleigh attempted to plant a colony on the Atlantic coast. Like John Cabot he secured the loan of a ship, paid all the expenses himself, and promised a share of the profits of the venture to the crown. Elizabeth, then Queen of England and tight-fisted like her grandfather Henry VII, loaned him the ship; and gave him her blessing but nothing more. All that came of Raleigh's venture was his landing somewhere on the coast of what was later to become North Carolina, and his naming the locality Virginia in honor of his virgin queen.

A subsequent English venture put a hundred and fifty men, women and children ashore on Roanoke Island off the North Carolina coast in July 1587. The leader, John White, returned to England for necessary help for the settlers, but they did not live to receive it; what became of them nobody knows.

England made no further attempt to colonize America until 1607, when Jamestown was founded.

The Netherlands, at the time of the discovery of America, had been united for only a generation, and even this union soon fell to pieces and remained disunited for some eighty years. Then, in 1595, the Netherlands sent out a first expedition to the East Indies. This was followed in 1609 by the one sent to America under Henry Hudson, an Englishman, who sailed in search of a northwest passage to China. He discovered instead the river which now bears his name.

Like Columbus, and others a hundred years before him, and still others for a hundred years after him, Hudson was searching for that will-o'-the-wisp short western passage to the Land of Spices that would supplant the old overland routes across Asia, Persia and Arabia, or by way of Egypt, or the long sea route around the African continent; but it is not to be concluded that the general interest in the Land of Spices indicated an unusual dietary taste for such condiments. As no method of making artificial ice had yet been invented, spices were used to keep meats "fresh" during the warm months; and spices, used as perfumes, undoubtedly lent a semblance of freshness to the "upper crust" of European society.

And besides spices there were jewels, rugs and silks to be had in that far-off land at a saving of the usually enormous profits that middlemen along the old routes added to the cost

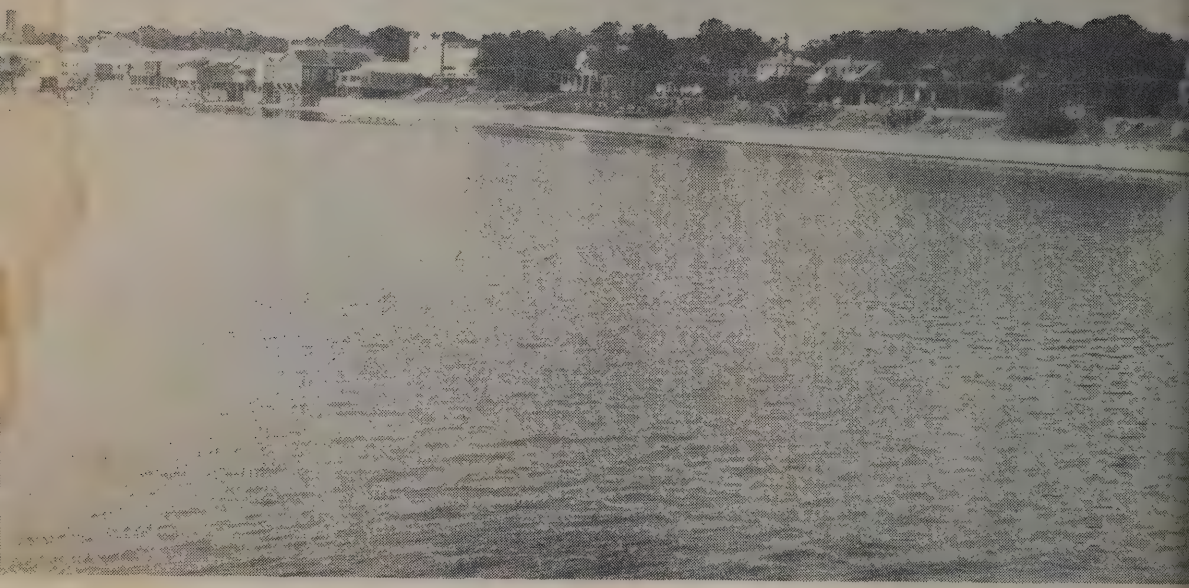
Hudson failed to reach India; but his voyage resulted in the founding of New Amsterdam (later to become New York) in 1623.

Not until Spain and Portugal had passed the zenith of their greatness and begun to decline did the Dutch turn their attention southward to the West Indies.

Five hundred years before any of the others the Vikings had sailed westward and had almost certainly set a colony on the North American continent. They also had established settlements in Iceland and Greenland; but neither the climate nor the natural resources of those northern districts were sufficiently attractive, and they turned their attention to the more agreeable and profitable business of raiding the coastal people of Europe. Even when such raids became unprofitable because the people

Knoll at Ocean Springs where "Old Biloxi," then the capital of Louisiana, was located. Bienville's hut stood at the extreme left. 1719-1720.

Location of "Old Biloxi" as seen from bridge over Bay of Biloxi, going east.



Location of the first grants made between New Orleans and Pascagoula when this coast was reinhabited. Left - Nicaise: right Mme. Charlo: 1781.

learned when to expect and how to repel them, the Vikings felt no great hankering for that land, told of in their sagas, which they had discovered half a thousand years before.

Though the Vikings had been the first to discover America their descendants were the last to attempt a colony there. In 1638 Sweden established a settlement, composed of Swedes and Finns, at Fort Christina (now Wilmington) on Delaware Bay. However, she permitted the Dutch to swallow it up in 1655. Today the only Scandinavian colonial possession anywhere is Viking-discovered Greenland.

We see, then, that after the discovery of America a hundred years passed before France, England or the Netherlands gave attention to America; and then they confined themselves to the Atlantic shore above Florida, which Spain and Portugal had neglected.

Two hundred years passed before France and England gave serious attention to the Gulf Coast of Amichel. By that time not only was Spain declining but Portugal also.

The latter country, as we have seen, had led the way in navigation and had become rich and powerful; in fact, so great indeed was Emanuel of Portugal that Ferdinand of Spain gave two of his daughters to him in marriage, first Isabella and then Mary, at a time when any other monarch in Europe would have thought himself fortunate to get one.

The Pope, as we have written, had divided the world in two for Spain and Portugal by drawing a line running north and south on the map of the Atlantic Ocean along the 50th parallel of west longitude. Spain was to have anything that she found on the west side of the line, and Portugal was given the east side. The only part of the Americas that projected into the Portuguese zone was the eastern portion of what was to become Brazil, which enormous country thereby fell to Portugal. It did her little good, however, as there were no such quantities of accumulated gold to be found in Brazil as were gathered by Spain's conquistadores in Mexico and Peru.

To make matters worse, Portugal followed the example of Spain and established a Holy Inquisition of her own which, like Spain's, drove out of her country the most valuable classes of

citizens. Perhaps from that time Portugal's decline from greatness may be dated.

Both England and France decided to take advantage of the situation and invade Amichel.

IV

The French Arrive—Bienville Appears

In 1673 two men Joliet, a Canadian, and Father Marquette, a Frenchman, left Canada, which country France had begun to settle some seventy years before, and went in search of the great Mississippi River. They, too, hoped to find a western route to India.

Their first sight of the Mississippi was from the mouth of the Wisconsin River; but instead of flowing west, as they had hoped, it flowed south. Even so they followed it down to near the mouth of the Arkansas river to make sure; and then, being convinced that it emptied into the Gulf of Mexico and not the Indian Ocean, they retraced their long way back to Canada, where they spread the news of their discovery. Governor Frontenac of Quebec named the river Colbert.

Regretfully the explorers found that their king, Louis XIV, was not interested in the Mississippi, nor even in Canada; European affairs were engrossing his attention; and for nine years Joliet's report of the discovery of the Mississippi lay forgotten in the royal pigeonholes.

Then La Salle, after making his memorable trip down the great river and claiming the whole watershed for Louis XIV, and naming it Louisiana after the king, succeeded, in 1682, in arousing in the king a mild interest in his western possession. La Salle, being a man of vision, had recognized the great value of the river and the country through which it ran as a means of establishing for France an empire in America.

He presented his idea to the king, but Louis was cold toward it; like the Spaniards of De Soto's expedition a hundred and forty years before, he saw in the river only a way out of a country in which there was no plunder to be found. Again like them, Louis was interested in gold and silver; but as he doubted the existence

of those precious metals in Louisiana he attached no importance to the country and cast a furtive glance toward Spanish Mexico, next door to Louisiana, where he knew there was gold.

Giving La Salle the hint that war with Spain might come some day, the king cautioned him to be discreet, and then authorized La Salle to establish a settlement near Mexico.

Together the two organized an expedition, and away it sailed under the joint command of La Salle and a French admiral, Sieur de Beaugeau.

Now, it was La Salle's whole ambition to find the mouth of the Mississippi, via the Gulf, establish a permanent settlement on that great river, and thus found an empire which he might govern in the name of the king. This, of course, did not agree with the king's more simple and direct idea of preparing for a raid on Mexico.

La Salle brooded over the difficulties presented by this conflict of ideas and purposes. Of course he could not discuss them with Beaugeau, so La Salle fell silent and moody. To make the situation worse, he was uncertain as to the river's longitude at the mouth.

Beaugeau became piqued by La Salle's taciturn mood, and also contemptuous of his apparent ignorance about where the river was to which he was taking his settlers and supplies. Daily the two men became more distant and polite to each other; and when at last La Salle suspected that they had gone too far west and had sailed past the Mississippi, and he wanted to turn back, Beaugeau was in a humor to refuse, so he landed La Salle (early in 1685) on the Bay of San Bernardo, now called Matagorda Bay, several hundred miles west of the Mississippi, and returned to France.

With very little idea of where he was, La Salle disembarked, established a post on La Vaca Bay, which connected with Matagorda Bay, and spent the next three years wandering throughout the surrounding wilderness (now Texas) looking for his lost river. Meanwhile his people were raided by Indians and suffered from illnesses and lack of supplies.

At last La Salle decided to return to France by way of Canada to seek help; but he was shot and killed on the way by a disgruntled member of his party late in 1687. What befell those who remained behind at the post is still not known. The Span-

iards admit having sent out several expeditions against the settlement, one of which is said to have discovered it in ruins and without survivors. Spain put the blame on the Indians.

Beaugeau had remained in the Bay only long enough to realize the dangers and difficulties to which the settlers would be exposed, especially since he sailed away with an important quantity of their ammunition. On his return to France Louis XIV learned of La Salle's plight; and, through other channels, he learned that the Spaniards were searching the coast for La Salle, bent on destroying the French; but still he did nothing about it.

When, however, Henri de Tonti, a devoted friend of La Salle living in the Illinois country, heard that La Salle had arrived on the coast de Tonti set out in search of him at the mouth of the river and for many miles along the coast on either side of it. History tells of a letter which de Tonti left in a hollow tree by a post which he erected near the mouth of the river, and of another letter, written on a piece of bark, which he left with the Quinipissa Indians, whose camp was about where the United States Barracks now is below New Orleans. De Tonti told the Indians that a white man would call for it.

After killing La Salle and other members of the party returning to France the survivors passed through the Illinois country on their way to Canada and received help from one of de Tonti's lieutenants. They were careful, however, not to mention that they had murdered La Salle. Believing that he was still alive, de Tonti made a second attempt to find and rescue him, and nearly lost his own life; during the search his companions deserted him, and de Tonti, handicapped with only a metal hook for a hand which he had lost in war, now fell ill with fever; to avoid starvation he had to eat his dogs.

After La Salle's failure France did nothing about the Gulf Coast for another ten years.

Though Spain claimed ownership of the whole coast, by right of discovery and by gift of the Pope, she had not succeeded in making a settlement on its shores during all the time since its discovery by Pineda in 1519. In fact she had not even attempted anything of the sort for a hundred years when France and England began to take an interest in it toward the end of the seventeenth century.

France and England felt that discovery without occupation did not justify Spain's claim; and as for the decree of the Pope, Francis the First of France expressed his point of view when he said he would like to see the clause in Adam's will which disinherited him in the New World.

So in 1698 all three countries—England, France and Spain—began a race for the coast of Amichel.

To lead her expedition, which sailed from France on October 24, 1698, Louis XIV selected Pierre Lemoyne d'Iberville, a Canadian by birth. Iberville was a distinguished officer in the French navy, resourceful, intrepid, and filled, as La Salle had been, with ambition to found an empire for France in Louisiana.

When he reached Pensacola in January he found the unfinished fort that Spain had set there to forestall him. It would have been easy for Iberville to demolish the fort, but he guessed, and correctly, that every other foot of the coast was unoccupied and undefended. So. when the Spanish governor very politely informed him that the whole country belonged to Spain and asked him to go away, Iberville, intending to appropriate the entire Mississippi valley for France, said he was only searching the coast for some Canadian subjects, and, with equal politeness, sailed away.

At the mouth of Mobile Bay he made some soundings, explored an island which he named Ile Massacre because of the number of human bones that lay piled about or scattered in the sand, asked Indians the direction of the Mississippi and, getting no information, sailed on.

He found deep water again at an island some fifty miles west of Massacre, where he anchored his two frigates and the fifty-gun ship of war. He named this island Ile aux Vaisseau (Ship Island) from the circumstance.

With the aid of glasses he noted some Indians on the mainland twelve miles away. Hoping to learn of the Mississippi from them, he, his young brother Bienville, Sauvole and a few others embarked in two ships' barges and set out for the shore; but before he could reach it the Indians had disappeared. Following their footprints in the sand he came upon them again, this time paddling to and fro between the mainland and an island near it

which the Indians called Deer Island, and which had obscured his view of a bay which lay behind it.

After making friends with the Indians, he took several of them to inspect his ships, leaving Bienville ashore as a hostage.

When these Biloxi Indians had been entertained, given presents and returned to shore they told Iberville of a very large river that lay some distance farther west. Hoping that it might be the Mississippi, Iberville set out in small boats to find it.

As he approached its mouth he saw no river, for its passes into the Gulf were obscured by piles of mud-covered debris that had the appearance of low palisades. He might have sailed by, as La Salle had done fourteen years before, had not an approaching storm and darkness decided him to risk a landing on the "rocks."

Soon he found the true nature of the obstructions and discovered an opening that led to quiet water which he identified as that of a river, and ere long he reached the main stream. But even then he was not sure he had reached the Mississippi, for what he saw did not correspond with the fanciful description given of the Mississippi in a book published in Europe by a priest, Father Hennepin, who claimed to have descended the river some years before.

Iberville remained uncertain until he had ascended the river for a distance of about a hundred miles and had heard from Indians of de Tonti's visit and the letter left by him for La Salle. In addition to this, Iberville was shown an ancient double-meshed coat of mail that was evidently a relic of the De Soto expedition of a hundred and fifty years before. He also was shown several woolen coats and a prayer book in which was written the name of one of La Salle's men—relics of La Salle's descent of the river in 1682.

These things satisfied Iberville that he had really found the great river that led north all the way to Canada.

After making his way another hundred or so miles up the Mississippi he returned to his ships while his brother Bienville sought and found the Indians who had de Tonti's letter. These were the Houmas, whom he met near where Donaldsonville is today. They were associates of the Quinipissas, with whom de Tonti had left the second letter, below New Orleans. The Houmas had

been told by the Quinipissas that a white man would call for the letter; so when Bienville asked for it they took it from a hollow tree where they had placed it for safekeeping, and handed it to him. They were much impressed by this first experience with written language, which was merely a few words written on a piece of bark; they called it the "speaking bark."

Possessed of this further proof that they had found the Mississippi, Bienville proceeded at once to Ship Island.

Iberville had returned by leaving the Mississippi through a little stream some hundred and forty miles above the Indian village of Chinchuba where New Orleans was later founded. This little river, which afterwards bore his name, is now known as Bayou Manchac. It led Iberville to two lakes, which he named Maurepas and Pontchartrain.

Bienville returned to Ship Island via the mouth of the Mississippi and reached there only eight hours after Iberville.

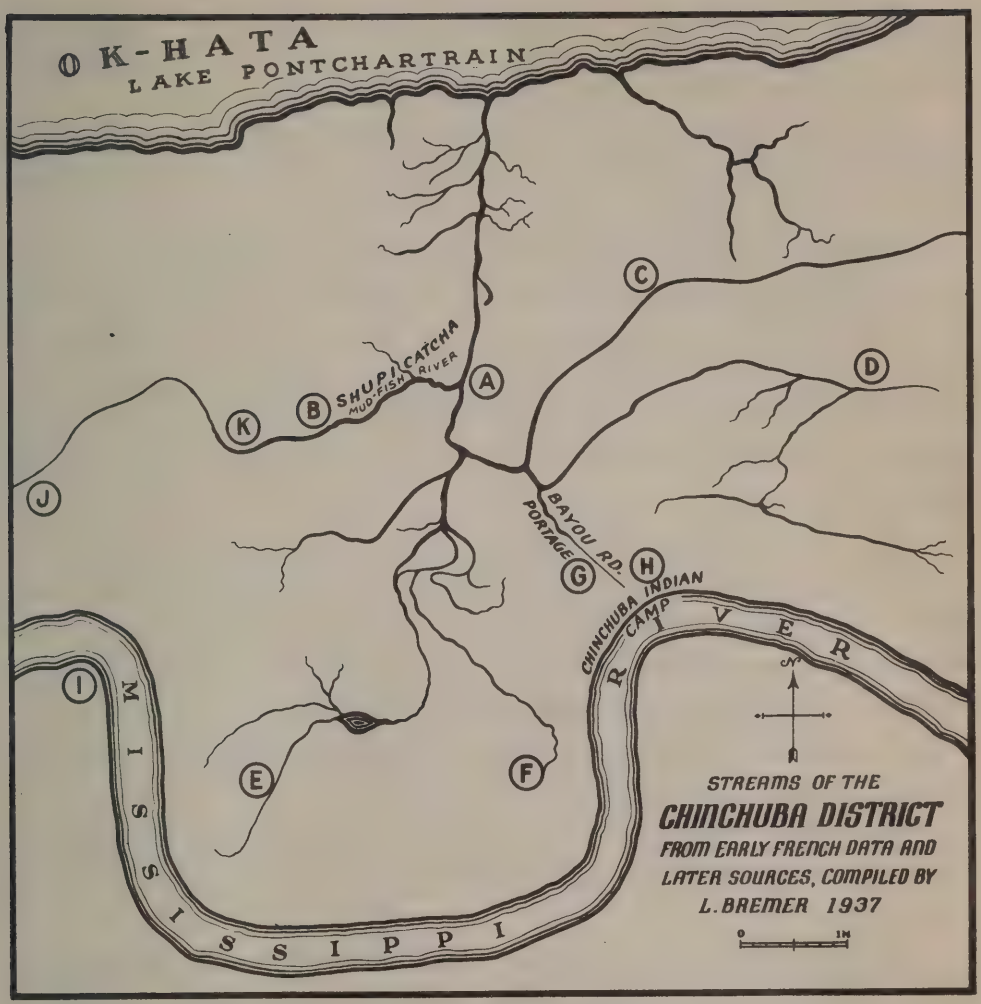
Ship Island, a flat strip of sparsely wooded sand in the open Gulf, could afford the French no concealment should the Spaniards send a fleet to oppose their attempt to establish a post. For that reason Iberville explored the bay which he had seen behind Deer Island for a suitable place to locate a fortified settlement.

On its eastern shore he found a relatively high bluff with gullies on either side—which still exist—and on January 20, 1699, he began the construction of a wooden fort of four bastions which he named Fort Maurepas.

Here his settlement was not only out of sight from the open Gulf but, due to the shallowness of the water, Spanish ships could not sail in to attack him. Unfortunately, neither could his own ships sail in to unload, and supplies had to be lightered to shore in barges of light draft; but this was a matter of secondary importance at that particular time.

To the settlement he gave the name "Biloxi" in honor of the tribe of Indians he had encountered there and who had given him his first information concerning the location of the Mississippi River.

Thus Biloxi ("Old Biloxi," now Ocean Springs, Mississippi) became the first capital of that vast country extending from Canada to the Gulf of Mexico and from the Appalachians on the east to the Rocky Mountains on the west, and comprising the whole



A Now Bayou St. John
B Now Metaire Road
C Now Bayou Sauvage or Gentilly Boulevard
D Former Bayou Bienvenue
E On Belair-Bore' Plantation
F On Jesuit Plantation
G Now Gov. Nicholls Street
H Alligator Indians Camp
I Nine Mile Point
J Three Miles Below Tchoupitoulas (Shupic Goula) Camp
K Beaulieu's Cypress Mill, 1722, Metaire Rd. & New Basin Canal

watershed of the Mississippi and its tributaries, claimed for France and named Louisiana by La Salle in 1682.

Iberville installed Sauvole as governor and Bienville as lieutenant governor and in June sailed back to France to report his success to the king.

Upon Iberville's departure Bienville immediately set out to explore the country. On August 25 he discovered and named the Bay of St. Louis; then Heron Bay, Ile du Pois (Pea Island) at the mouth of Pearl River, the Rigolets (meaning Drains) and the Point aux Herbes, the end of the promontory on the southeast shore of Lake Pontchartrain marking the narrowest part of the lake.

Continuing his explorations, Bienville, with Penicault and a few Canadians and a small number of Indians, were paddling down the Mississippi, in September, when he met an English sloop of war, commanded by a Captain Barr, making its way upstream. The vessel was in difficulties, for, at the point where they met, the river turns sharply from north to south of east, which made sailing very difficult.

Barr had come for the purpose of claiming Louisiana for England, believing that the French had not yet made an establishment on it.

In this he was correct; but Bienville deceived Barr into believing the French were established a little farther upstream. It would have been easy for the Englishman to have disposed of Bienville and his few companions, but he realized the disadvantage he would be under should he come upon a French fort while trying to round a similar curve in the river; so he turned his sloop about and sailed downstream and away, leaving assurances that he would return later with reinforcements, but this he never did.

The locality where this encounter took place was only a few miles below where New Orleans was afterward built, and it has ever since been known as English Turn.

Bienville had arrived at the spot barely in time to save the country from falling to England instead of France. On such small happenings may the fate of a country, or even an empire, depend.

Four months later, upon Iberville's return from France, a little French fort, called "La Boulaye," was built on the Mis-

sissippi some thirty or forty miles below Chinchuba, the Indian village, where New Orleans was set; and this fort guarded the river for France for the next seven years.

In July, 1700, only a few months after this fort was finished, an overland party of Englishmen from Carolina arrived on the banks of the Mississippi; but La Boulaye was there to maintain the claim of France to the Province of Louisiana; the Englishmen were a little too late.

The first two and a half years which Bienville spent in Louisiana, exploring the country and learning the languages and dialects of the different nations and tribes of Indians that inhabited it, were probably the only happy ones in his career. During those few years he was not saddled with heavy responsibilities and cares, nor was he a mark for envy and malice. But an end came to them when, on August 22, 1701, Governor Sauvole died in Old Biloxi and was buried in his capital. Sauvole had been nursing subordinates who had contracted yellow fever, and he died of the same disease. Bienville hurried from Fort La Boulaye and assumed the duties of governor at Fort Maurepas. For seventeen years thereafter he discharged the duties of that office without formal recognition; his commission as governor was not handed him until 1718.

Let us get some idea of this young man, brought to Louisiana and made second in command at the age of nineteen, the acting governor of Louisiana at twenty-one.

Bienville

Jean Baptiste Le Moyne de Bienville was the son of Charles Le Moyne of Canada, who had been decorated by the French government for having possessed the courage, diplomacy, hardihood and enthusiasm necessary to plant among the Indians in America a colony which had survived and grown. Bienville was the brother of Iberville, whom the French government had selected to lead the expedition to Louisiana. Under Iberville he had seen active service in the French navy and had crossed the Atlantic twice before he reached the vast unknown wilderness that was Amichel, a major portion of which had now been named Louisiana.

At twenty he was in charge of the little fort on the Mississippi and entrusted with the duty of defending that river against the two great rival aspirants for its ownership, England and Spain.

At twenty-one he had explored four hundred miles of the Gulf Coast and an equal number of miles of the Mississippi River. He had accomplished this by the slow process of navigation in small boats and canoes, with the tides and currents half the time against him, and on foot; and this at a time when Louisiana was peopled only by savages; any white man whom he chanced to meet was likely to be an Englishman or Spaniard opposed to his getting a foothold in Louisiana for France.

Bienville made friends with the Indians. Wherever he went he picked up members of whatever tribe occupied the country through which he was passing, and from them he learned to talk in their own language. To win their respect he bore hardship and fatigue with Indian stoicism, never permitting himself to lag or complain even when wading through swamps with water up to his chest.

His fairness and forcefulness made him a valued friend. Indians began to seek his advice and protection; they knew that a Frenchman could not escape his punishment if he injured an Indian in any way. He mediated between tribes that were on bad terms, sought out the causes of friction, prescribed remedies and decided what restitutions the guilty should make or what punishments they should suffer.

When, at the end of 1701, Iberville returned to Louisiana, bringing the news that France and Spain had joined in war against England, the French in Louisiana were ordered to abandon the fort at Old Biloxi and move eastward so as to be closer to their allies in Pensacola (old Pensacola, where Barrancas now is). Due to the fact that, at the moment, Iberville lay ill in the hospital at Pensacola, the responsibility of moving everything fell to Bienville. When sufficiently recovered, Iberville returned to France; and that was the last Bienville ever saw of him.

Thereafter it was Bienville's task to find subsistence for his people as, now that a war was on, supplies often failed to arrive from France. He also had to give military help to the Spaniards, against whom Indians were sent by the English in Carolina.

No matter what he was called upon to do he contrived to make good by some means; and this won him the respect and friendship of Spaniard as well as Indian. Of course he stood equally well with his Canadian people, who appreciated his ability and good sense.

There was one thing, however, that he did not seem able to do, and that was, to make friends of the French. The reason is not far to seek. It was his duty to protect the settlers and the interests of France against the criminally inclined French whom France exiled to Louisiana; likewise he had to punish French deserters from his always-too-weak garrisons, which were made up largely of the scum of the French army; the very life of the people depended on the garrisons. In order to enforce the law, the forms of execution which he sanctioned, as punishment for murder or desertion, were spectacular and horrible; but we can believe that such punishments, usual among all nations in his day, were judged by him necessary in the wild country under his care, at a time when slaughter, both in commerce and war, was the order of the day, when animal pelts and human scalps brought money and were the only quick and certain assets, and when Indian raids, floods and death from hardship and disease made up the grand total of the daily news. We can understand that, under such circumstances, humane forms of execution would have failed utterly to be impressive. Judging from his kindly countenance and the record of his thoughtful and benevolent deeds we do not believe that he enjoyed cruelty. But it made many enemies among the bad French citizens and soldiers.

Then, too, France soon followed the unfortunate custom of dividing colonial authority between a military head and a civil head, a very fruitful cause of friction and enmity. And to make matters worse, the civil servants sent to Louisiana were usually older and better educated men than Bienville, and often higher up in the government service. Perhaps for that reason these French officials were jealous of Bienville's authority, which seems to have been based on his superior ability, for though his government failed to issue to him a proper commission it held Bienville responsible.

Most of the officials came, too, with the hope of becoming rich in a few years, after which they intended to return to France

to live. Bienville, always deeply interested in the welfare of the colony and willing to put his own interests second, saw through their schemes and halted them.

Bienville is accused of having, on one occasion, employed means to reach an end that savored of treachery. This was the occasion when a malicious superior, Cadillac, ordered Bienville on an expedition to punish the Chickasaws, the large tribe that had defeated De Soto, though Bienville had but half a company of soldiers with him. Evidently Cadillac hoped the Indians would scalp Bienville, and that would be the end of him.

However, Bienville accomplished his mission and returned alive.

All this disciplining and outwitting of Frenchmen, both high and low, by an uncommissioned Canadian, stored up trouble for him, and the French kings were not of a sort to see him through. They could not, or did not, manage their own affairs in France half so well as Bienville did in a wilderness.

V

Bienville Founds Mobile — St. Denys Founds Barataria

After receiving Iberville's instructions, issued from his hospital bed in Pensacola, Bienville began the task of moving. The new site was twenty-seven miles up the Mobile River on a bluff that was almost entirely surrounded by the river and one of its branches, and about a mile below the Florida Line that was established, by agreement between Spain and the United States, nearly a century later.

On January 17, 1702, erection of the new Fort (Louis) was begun, and on March 19 the first family of settlers arrived from Biloxi. Shortly afterwards Fort Maurepas was destroyed at Iberville's orders.

Two years later Henri de Tonti, previously mentioned for his attempted rescue of La Salle, paid Mobile a visit, contracted yellow fever, and died. Somewhere on this first site of Mobile, which a hundred years later the Spaniards gave to the widow Rochon for a cow pasture, is the grave, now lost and forgotten, of that most faithful friend, Henri de Tonti — one of the most heroic and unselfish figures in early American history.

When Spain and France became allies against England Iberville conceived the idea of opening up a little private trade between himself and the Spaniards living in the Tejas (now Texas) district; so, when he arrived in Louisiana late in 1701 he brought with him a stock of goods which he placed in a warehouse which he had built for himself below Mobile.

For his agent he selected Louis Juchereau de St. Denys, an active, adventurous and fearless Canadian, a born trader, and the uncle of Iberville's wife.

Early in 1702 St. Denys set out overland on his new mission. Unfortunately, neither Iberville nor St. Denys knew that Spain had no intention of permitting the French to enjoy trade relations

with her subjects in Mexico, even though France now was her ally. When St. Denys appeared in Spanish territory he was arrested, taken to Mexico City and jailed, and his goods confiscated. Emptyhanded, he returned to Mobile in 1704, related his unhappy experience, and resumed his place as an officer in the French army.

Spain's attitude was both foolish and unfortunate. The French and Spanish posts in America were far from their home lands and often neglected, and now that the two countries were at war with England their colonists often found themselves in dire need of something that one or the other could supply. Exchanges of food and ammunition were in time sanctioned, and the Spanish viceroy even thanked Bienville on one occasion for his help, and promised him anything that he might need in return.

Shortly after his return from Mexico St. Denys complained that he was "tired of post life at Mobile, where he could collect no pay," and he resigned his position in the army so that he might "retire to Biloxi." He must have tired very quickly, for thus far he had experienced almost no post life; and one might suppose, too, that life at Biloxi, which place had been abandoned and even the fort destroyed, would be more tiresome still. As for pay, how could he earn any there?

In this connection we may note that west of the mouth of the Mississippi there is a bay, which, before the arrival of the French, had been called the Bay of Ascension. But soon after the French arrived on the coast a portion of this bay — a region of intricate bayous, islands and lagoons where only the initiated might venture without becoming lost, and hidden from view from the gulf by several islands — became known as the "Lakes of Barataria."

The name Barataria is suggestive of the French word barraterie and the Spanish word barateria as well as of the English word barratry, all of which mean the commission, by a ship's captain, of an unlawful act such as the improper disposal of property belonging to the ship's owner.

Soon another name for the lagoons of this region came into use, "The Lakes of St. Denys." But this name, in time, was dropped for Barataria, and today only the upper bayou, from Little Lake to Barataria, is called the Bayou of St. Denys. These names are

significant when coupled with the resignation of St. Denys from the army and a question which soon arose: where, when and by whom were Iberville's goods disposed of?

In September, 1706, Bienville's brother Chateauguay reached Louisiana with the disheartening news that Iberville, while assembling an expedition to descend on the English at Charleston, South Carolina, had died of yellow fever at Havana in July. Not only was Sauvole dead, and de Tonti, but now Bienville's brother Iberville, his only friend at court in France; and all of that same mysterious disease, yellow fever. With a war in progress, and no commission from his government, and the Spanish government unfriendly to the presence of the French in Louisiana, Bienville was left in sole charge.

As if this was not enough, a Frenchman named La Salle, jealous of Bienville and wishing to injure him, reported to France that Bienville, after selling the king's goods to Spaniards and giving them away to Indians with a lavish hand, was selling the French colonists goods of his own at exorbitant prices.

The king ordered an investigation and despatched d'Artaguette to Mobile in 1707 to summon witnesses before him both for and against Bienville. The evidence which d'Artaguette collected proved that Bienville was not guilty as charged, and that he had never had any goods of his own. Iberville, however, had possessed such goods; but evidence could not be found that he had sold any of them to his French colonists, nor was there evidence that he had sold any to Spaniards. Yet they were gone.

St. Denys was not in Mobile during the trial; he was said to be with a few Biloxi Indians on the Mississippi, at La Boulaye, which is not far from Barataria.

From all this we are led to believe that St. Denys, after his experience in 1702, when he tried to sell Iberville's goods openly in Texas and was jailed, availed himself of the peculiar adaptability of the Barataria country to dispose of the remainder, between 1704 and 1707. For similar purposes, the neighborhood since then has been used by the notorious Lafitte and others.

Among the archives at New Orleans there is an account of the wreck of the Spanish sloop Kalandra in 1735 off the Chandeleur Islands. These islands are a bit to the east of the Mississippi River, and Barataria is a little to the west of it.

The Kalandra had a length of eighteen feet with a seven foot beam—a convenient size for operating in those shallow waters.

A lone survivor gave news of the wreck and then disappeared without waiting to claim any part of the salvaged goods and money, or to help in burying his dead companions, whose bodies were washed ashore. Perhaps the nature of the cargo had something to do with his self-effacement. Here is the list:

About forty bolts of silk.
Five hundred uppers for shoes.
A package containing two small wooden saints.
Two wooden rosaries.
A two-handed cutlass in a leather scabbard.
A dagger with silver trimmings.
A flask containing sweet wine.
A quantity of indigo.
Charts, maps etc.

A coffer containing sand in which were hidden 306 piasters (better known in pirate lore as "pieces of eight", 60 reals and four half reals—in all about three hundred and fourteen dollars in hard cash.

Such real money was seldom seen by the French colonist in Louisiana. France gave them "card money", a government obligation which the crown had the uncomfortable habit of depreciating every now and then. The only chance one had of handling real money was when one dealt with a Spaniard, and this was a forbidden pleasure.

French officials heard of the wreck of the Kalandra and wished to know what such a boat, with such a cargo, was doing in French waters. For the purpose of informing themselves they held an investigation and summoned as witnesses the men who were fortunate enough to be in the neighborhood at the time and who buried the dead and divided the salvaged goods and money without making a report to the authorities. Nothing was learned except what we have noted. Witnesses Lacombe, Chauvin and Brunez were "hunting" when they came upon the wreck. Nicolo Christina was "on his way to Cat Island." The first two were energetic traders and businessmen; the last was the individual

who, later on, spent many years isolated on Cat Island, and for whom Pass Christian was named.

While Iberville still lived France made one very respectable shipment of humanity to Old Mobile; it consisted of five priests, a score of decent young women, and two Roman Catholic Sisters to nurse in the new hospital.

For nine years the French remained at Old Mobile, accomplishing nothing except what Bienville could do in the way of making friends of the surrounding Indians.

In 1711 a flood nearly washed the little settlement away and it became apparent that a better location would have to be found. Bienville selected a spot on Mobile Bay where the water of the Mobile and Tensaw rivers spread and could never rise high enough to be dangerous. Bienville had it laid out with streets running at right angles to each other. Old Mobile had never been more than a stockaded enclosure with a few buildings scattered about, but now the French had something a little more townlike. In 1712 they moved into their new capital.

In the same year impoverished France turned Louisiana over to a rich business man of that country to be run as a private monopoly. This was Antoine Crozat, who was to have the exclusive right to the trade of the country; the mines and the lands were to be his as long as he worked them, and he was privileged to introduce one shipload of slaves annually into Louisiana.

Crozat sent La Mothe Cadillac, the founder of Detroit, to the province as civil governor and a sort of partner. Cadillac was to make investigations and point out the easiest ways for them both to get rich quickly. He ridiculed the idea of engaging in agriculture, saying that the land in Louisiana was too poor to raise anything on. Instead he suggested prospecting for mines, raising buffalo wool for the market, and opening up trade with the Spaniards — all of which projects were visionary and impracticable.

What little ambition the settlers might have begun with was stifled by his avaricious monopoly. The people were not permitted to trade anywhere but at the company store, and Cadillac paid them what he pleased for what they had to offer, and charged them what he pleased for their necessities.

As the nearby English paid better prices for what they bought from the settlers—chiefly furs—and charged less for better goods than Cadillac offered, it is no wonder that the French traded their goods in the deep woods to English traders.

Some deserted from the civil and military ranks, only to be caught and scalped by Indians unfriendly to the French; others were caught by Indians friendly to the French and returned to Mobile for punishment; it meant death either way.

Those who remained at the post imitated the Indian way of life and hunted, fished and raised a little corn and a few vegetables, but usually only enough for their own private use. The few skins they collected were traded at the company store for what they would bring, and for the balance of their necessities they went into debt to the company as far as they were permitted to.

Occasionally a surreptitious sale of a chicken or a few vegetables was made to the Spaniards at Pensacola, sixty miles away from Mobile through a trackless forest; the settlers were not permitted to own seagoing boats.

Cadillac, with his prejudice toward agriculture, his visionary schemes and his personal prejudice, avarice and habit of ridicule, was the least likely person to build up a colony. He was a thorn in the flesh, not only to those in Louisiana but to Crozat and the crown. After five of the proposed fifteen years of Crozat's contract had gone by Crozat realized that the dead expense of the colony was swamping him financially and asked permission to hand Louisiana back to the crown. The government appreciated his position and released him.

Before dismissing the Crozat administration there is one letter, written during that period, from which we would like to quote:

July 15, 1713.

Director Duclose to Count Pontchartrain:

> There came over on the Baron de la Fauche twelve girls whom M. Clairambault had embarked at Port Louis, but so ugly and ill made that the inhabitants of this country, and especially the Canadians, are not at all eager for them.
>
> Two of them, however, are already married; I fear very much that the others may remain a long time (single).

It appears to me that in such a choice M. Clairambault ought to pay attention to looks rather than to virtue.

The Canadians, and especially the backwoodsmen, of whom we have found a rather large number here, who are all very well-made men, are not very scrupulous about the conduct that the girls have observed before they married them; and if they had found some of them well made and to their liking, perhaps some of them would have remained here to marry them and to settle here, which would increase the colony; whereas, on the contrary, they have all gone back, asserting that they prefer the Indian women whom most of them marry, and especially at the Illinois, at the hands of the Jesuits who are missionaries there.

The less virtuous, but perhaps better-looking and better-made young ladies who did not care to marry, were segregated and housed back of town at New Mobile, behind the house for the priests — an arrangement we might think embarrassing. They were called "filles de plaisir."

After five years of Cadillac there were only eleven men, twenty-eight women, twenty-five children, and a few cows, pigs and chickens, in the colony, that were not on the government payroll. The rest consisted of about two companies of soldiers and their officers, a few civilian employees and a few priests, all drawing pay or hoping that they might receive their pay at some time in the future.

When Cadillac returned to France he was jailed for his open ridicule of the colony.

Bienville had constructed little Fort Rosalie at Natchez, in 1716, with the consent and help of the Indians.

Louis XIV had died in 1715 and a regent had been appointed. Realizing, when Crozat asked to be released from his contract, that the task of making anything out of the province was too great for one man, the regent took the colony back and turned it over to a company headed by John Law under a contract similar to the former one with Crozat. France was unable to develop the colony herself, for during the reign of the vain, extravagant, belligerent and enefficient "Grand Monarch," Louis XIV, the country had become completely demoralized. Louis had

contracted debts that France could see no way of paying even by mortgaging the future, and he had surrounded himself with a court of imitators who stole and extorted from sheer necessity. The national treasury was, of course, empty.

At this desperate juncture John Law, an English or Scotch financier, appeared upon the scene and offered a solution. He proposed the establishment of a bank that would form a company with an unlimited stock, secured by improved and unimproved real estate; in short, he proposed to make Louisiana the basis of his capitalization.

There was one important difference between Crozat's contract and the one made with Law. The Company of the West, as the new enterprise was called, was obligated to develop agriculture in Louisiana; large tracts of land were to be offered to settlers or to people who would undertake to settle others in the province, and long credits were offered them for the purchase of necessary supplies and slaves.

For some time the channel at Dauphin Island, leading into Mobile Bay, had been filling up with sand. For that reason, one of the first concerns of the new company was to find a better harbor, and that meant the relocating of the capital. Pensacola had the best harbor on the coast, a fact that Iberville had discovered years before. At that time he went so far as to have the French government approach Spain with an offer to buy Pensacola, but when Spain rejected the offer with disdain France dropped the subject.

Pensacola, having thus been eliminated years before, the directors of the company turned their attention toward the Mississippi River. Below Fort Rosalie at Natchez the river had lain unprotected since the abandonment of Fort La Boulaye in 1707.

Some of the directors thought it would be well to establish the new post on the Mississippi. Others contended that ships could not pass the bars at the mouth of the river, and for that reason proposed to find a site at some point west of the river; they argued further that a settlement in such a situation would serve to head off Spaniards from the direction of Mexico.

Bienville strongly recommended the site of the old Indian camp, Chinchuba, where there was a short portage from the Mississippi to a branch of a bayou, which was later named St.

John, that connected with Lake Pontchartrain. A post at that place would be accessible by water from all directions.

While this discussion was going on, and before a site had been selected, the new capital was named New Orleans. In October, 1717, a storekeeper for New Orleans was appointed, and in December a major also. Some historians date the founding of the city from this period. However, no further progress was made until the next year, when Bienville was given his belated commission as military governor of Louisiana and decided to set New Orleans where it is today.

At once he called Jacques Pailloux de Barbazant, major general of Louisiana, from the recently built post at Fort Rosalie to become commander of the new town to be established farther down the river.

Bienville visited the site and erected a hut for himself — the first house built at New Orleans — and returned to Mobile.

VI

Bienville Selects Chinchuba

The spot which Bienville selected as the best place at which to locate his new port and capital was on the north side of the Mississippi where, for some fifty or sixty miles, it winds generally from west to east below Lakes Maurepas and Pontchartrain.

All along the river on that side were the winter camps of Indians whose summer homes were above those lakes and Lake Borgne.

This north side of the Mississippi was an ideal place for them during the cold weather; the tall, dense forest at their backs, with its heavy undergrowth of cane, palmetto and blackberry, shielded them from the biting northerly winds. Wood for their fires was scattered along the natural levee and stranded farther back against the underbrush — an ample supply which the river deposited there annually. Game and fish abounded in swamp, marsh, bayou, river and lakes; there were no mosquitoes at that season, and there was seldom any danger of the river overflowing its banks.

So, as the cold season approached, the mingoes (or headmen) of the little bands led their people to the banks of the Mississippi and camped there in comfort until spring.

When summer approached and the levee grew hot and steamy, and high water began to threaten them, the Indians recrossed the lakes to live among the sweet-smelling pines, on the edge of some favorite stream or spring, where they planted their corn and vegetables.

The early French mistook these separate bands to be different tribes because they bore different names, but all were Choctaws. The names only designated the streams and springs beside which they lived during most of the year.

There were the Chaouachas (Coon Rivers), first found on the

west and later on the east side of the river, at Jesuit Bend and then at English Turn. Above them, and just below where Jackson Barracks is today, below New Orleans, was the river camp of the Quinipissas (Clear Rivers), whom Iberville wrote of having found on the Mississippi in 1700; then came the Chinchubas (Alligators) at the Bayou St. John portage, who came from Chinchuba Bayou above Lake Pontchartrain, named for that old Southern family, the alligators.

Above them the Chapitoulas (Mudfish People) had their camp on the ridge back of Twelve Mile Point and what is now Highland Farm below the town of Kenner.

Still farther up, about eighteen miles above the Bayou St. John portage, were the Houmas. These were first found at the mouth of Red River, for which they were named; but now their village was at the end of the portage that led from Bayou La Branche to the Mississippi.

Above them came the Bayougoulas (Bayou People), whose district ended at Bayou Manchac.

For a time the Houmas lived just above the Bayougoulas, after leaving the mouth of Red River, but war with a tribe that lived still farther up the river compelled them to retreat to below the Bayougoulas.

In 1701 the Tensas, from upriver, attacked the latter and destroyed their village. And following this the Tunicas made the Houmas retreat to a temporary camp on the Bayou St. John portage.

When the site of the Chinchuba camp was selected as the proper location for New Orleans there seems to have been a misapprehension as to the name; some old maps labeled it Tchuchuma, which is evidently a confusion of the names of the two tribes that camped on that portage.

So the Baron Marc de Villiers du Turage was correct in believing that the portage on which New Orleans was built was not the Houma portage he knew of some eighteen miles above, and he was correct in saying it was not the Fish River portage, although Shupic Atcha does mean Mudfish River.

It appears that what is now known as Bayou Barataria was originally called Coon River; we suggest this because Lake

Salvador was once called Lake "Ouacha." The neighboring Indians were the Chaouachas—from Shawe Atcha (Coon River).

The Biloxis, whom the French later recognized as the de facto possessors of the marshes and pine lands east of New Orleans to Pascagoula, Mississippi, and who did not belong to the Choctaw nation, made their camp on Bayou St. John, where the Houmas had stopped for a while. This was about where Moss and De Soto streets are today.

For the Choctaws this was but a stopping place on the way to some camp on the Mississippi, but it became the permanent camp of the Biloxis in 1707, and they retained it through the French, and well into the Spanish, period.

In French times it bore no name that we know of, but during the Spanish period it became known as Biloxi. This was after Old Biloxi and New Biloxi, on the east and west sides of the bay of that name, had been abandoned by the French and repossessed by these aboriginal claimants. So the camp on Bayou St. John became the third place to bear the name Biloxi.

So much for the Indian camps in the neighborhood of New Orleans.

During the summer, when the Indians had returned to their homes north of the lakes, a hot sun set the atmosphere atremble above the deserted natural levee and batture. By day birds sang their songs with no human ear to hear them; and as night approached many kinds of frogs, katydids, crickets, locusts and mosquitoes lifted up a lonely chorus, punctuated by the weird bass of bull alligators.

The sudden eerie scream of an owl would startle the small creatures of the forest for a moment, but had the sound been caught by a human ear it would only have accentuated the utter loneliness of the place as the river flowed noiselessly past, just as it had for many hundreds of years, without ever reflecting the face of a white man until the year 1543.

In June of that year the hard-pressed survivors of De Soto's expedition fled, without ammunition, down the great stream, past deserted Chinchuba, pursued by a thousand Indians.

We may be sure that for a few moments the river near Chinchuba rang with war whoops as the red men, in barges and gaily painted canoes, followed their unhappy "conquerors" and kept

them dodging flights of arrows to which the Spaniards could not reply. But when pursued and pursuer had rounded the bend below Chinchuba the Mississippi became its silent self again, and for one hundred and forty more years the summer quiet of the river was undisturbed; not another white face passed that way until the year 1682, when the explorer La Salle descended the river in search of its outlet to the Gulf.

Bands of Indians who had not yet returned to their camps north of the lakes, on that April day, must have been amazed at his white face, aquiline nose and little black mustache turned up at the tips.

A few days later La Salle passed the Chinchuba camp again, on his return journey to the north, after having found the mouth of the river and explored one of its passes and a bit of the coast nearby.

Several years later the faithful de Tonti passed Chinchuba on his search for La Salle along the Gulf Coast, and again in 1689 on the same mission.

Then ten years went by—time enough for a papoose to grow to manhood—and Iberville discovered one of the entrances to the river and rowed in.

As he ascended the Mississippi he stopped where the marshes ended and the trees began, to climb one of the tallest trees and overlook the surrounding country.

It is probable that this was near Pointe-a-la-Hache and on or near the spot where Moscoso and the remnants of the De Soto expedition had stopped to get a last supply of food, more than one hundred and fifty years before, "believing that they were nearing the sea." Moscoso's description of the place, the time it took him to reach it from his starting point, and to reach the Gulf from there, suggest the neighborhood of Pointe-a-la-Hache.

On March 9, 1699, on his way up the river, Iberville saw Chinchuba for the first time. He was interested, and stopped there because Indians had told him that from that point a short portage led to a stream which connected with a lake six miles distant.

By this route he could return to his ships, which he had left at Ship Island, without having to go the much longer way around by the mouth of the Mississippi. Iberville then continued on his

way up the river seeking to identify it with the one La Salle had descended.

After finding the evidence he sought, and hearing of the letter left by de Tonti, he found his way back to Ship Island through the lakes.

Bienville, left to search for the letter de Tonti had entrusted to the Quinipissas, discovered it in the keeping of their associates, the Mongoulachas and Bayougoulas, whose camp was on the west side of the river at that time, between the present locations of Port Allen and Donaldsonville.

When these dauntless Canadian explorers came to the lower Mississippi Valley—the product of the silt carried down in the floodwaters of the great river and its tributaries — they found an almost unbroken forest stretching up from the immense salt marshes bordering the Gulf, and, along the last hundred miles and more of the river's course, the land was then, as it is today, but little above sea level at any point.

* The so-called "high-land" throughout this area consisted then, as it does now, of parts of low ridges—natural levees—each pair separated by the channel of the stream that built them. The bottom of this channel was commonly below sea level — some two hundred feet below at points in the lower Mississippi River, and sixty feet or more at places along smaller streams. These ridges rose with relative abruptness on the sides toward the stream, and from their crests sloped imperceptibly away, on their other sides, to the swamp or marsh level at a distance varying from a few hundred yards or less in the case of a small stream to as much as three miles at some sections of the Mississippi River. Thus, in southern Louisiana, instead of going down into a valley or gorge to reach a river, one ascends a long slope, imperceptible, it is true, but a slope that makes the difference between uninhabitable marsh or swamp and rich, hospitable "high land."

Man built his first artificial levees on the crests of these natural levees. Legend tells us that it was women and not "man" who built the first artificial levees — on the Mississippi at Bayou Goula, and in Bayou Lafourche, a dozen miles southeast of

*NOTE: I am indebted to Mr. O. F. R. Bruce of New Orleans, for much of the following material concerning the action of the Mississippi River.

Bayou Goula — the soil being carried in baskets by Indian squaws.

The way in which Nature did her building may be described thus: During times of flood, in the days before artificial levees, the velocity of the water going over the banks of a stream was immediately diminished and the coarser particles of the silt it carried were deposited at once. Most of the remaining, finer silt was deposited in progressively diminishing quantities and sizes as the floodwaters made their way "back" to swamp or marsh. Thus were laid down the natural levees and flood plains — the wonderfully fertile farmlands of southern Louisiana — to which the organic products of marsh and swamp vegetation contributed heavily both in their building and in their enrichment.

At every curve (part of a meander) of a stream the natural levee forming the outside of the curve, against which the current surged at times of high water, was gradually eroded away and became known as a "caving bank." And here a crevasse was apt to occur, followed by the scouring of a new channel which, however, seldom changed the course of the stream or developed into a distributary.

At each overflow the centrifugal force of the current sent a much greater volume of water over this somewhat lower levee than that which topped the opposite, inside levee. This resulted in less silt being laid down on the outside levee crest and the deposition of greater quantities on its back slope here than elsewhere, locally increasing the natural levee width and in most cases building new arms of higher land along overflow channels for considerable distances into adjacent lowlands.

Opposite an eroding bank the natural levee on the inside of a curve was washed gently by comparatively quiet water from which the coarser silt settled readily during overflows, in many if not most cases building this levee higher than the one directly opposite. Here the slack water caused relatively rapid deposit of silt on the stream side of the levee, forming bars and beaches. This inside bank became known as a "making bank," and the strip, sometimes very wide, built from it into the stream, was called a "batture."

Not only were battures formed on making banks but to some extent on straight stretches where the channel was more or less in midstream and silt settled from the slower moving water

along the banks and accumulated against vegetation and other obstructions.

Eroding action on the outside levees of curves, together with batture building against the inside levees, and also crevasses, resulted in the stream moving from side to side of its valley, thus building it up over its entire width. The Mississippi has shifted its course sixty miles or more within the valley it built for itself.

In January of 1700 Iberville visited Chinchuba a second time, going through Lake Pontchartrain and the Shupic Atcha, as the Indians called what is now Bayou St. John.

Near the southerly end of this bayou he passed what must have seemed a sluggish branch joining it from the west, and four hundred yards farther on he came to what he undoubtedly took for a similar branch from the east. But these were not branches of the Shupic Atcha; they and the four hundred yards of bayou that seemed to separate them were remnants of a vastly more important stream that had flowed there long before the Shupic Atcha came into being.

From our present geologic knowledge it appears that between 1500 and 4000 years ago, while the Mississippi River was moving east from what is now called Bayou Lafourche, which it was discarding, a main distributary channel was developed from the place where now stands the upper end of the town of Kenner, about twenty miles upriver from the subsequent site of Chinchuba.

The course of this channel was generally easterly, through what are now Metairie and New Orleans and out through the Gentilly section of the city, to the present location of the southerly outlet of Lake Pontchartrain—Chef Menteur Pass—which, however, did not then exist. At that point, near where Fort Macomb now stands, the channel forked, the northerly delta finger laying down the silt that formed the strip of double shore separating Lake Pontchartrain from Lake St. Catherine and continuing eastward, past where the Rigolets now flows, probably to beyond the present Pearl River delta.* The southern finger laid down what are now the southern and eastern shores of Lake St. Catherine,

*U. S. Highway Number 90 follows this course past Fort Pike into Mississippi.

over which the Louisville and Nashville railroad now runs.

For perhaps eight hundred years this principal river channel flowed. Depositing its silt as each high water sent it over its banks, it built its pair of natural levees with crests a few feet higher than the bordering swamps and marshes, each from five hundred to fifteen hundred feet wide, and some thirty-five or more miles long, and then it divided to form what is known as the Metairie-Gentilly subdelta, a part of the prairies "tremblant."'

Finally, as the river opened new outlets in developing its southerly course, the chanel of this discarded delta arm like those of all others, was gradually filled by silt and an accumulation of organic debris. Encroaching cypresses assisted the process, their stumps remaining among the channel deposit as typical relics of an old, main river channel which, during the process of deterioration, had been a cypress slough. While a slough it carried actively flowing water only during floods, each of which left its contribution of silt and debris and built to greater heights the natural levees along the main river until only the water of the greatest floods reached the slough—such superfloods occurring normally only once in several decades.

When, originally, this delta arm began to flow, the areas now covered by Lakes Maurepas, Pontchartrain, St. Catherine and Borgne, and by the western end of Mississippi Sound were lowlands, not water. During and after the development of this and the great St. Bernard (Parish) subdeltas the beds of these bodies of water were submerged during the regional subsidence of this section of the Mississippi delta under the enormous weight of accumulated sediment. Widely varying estimates have been made of the amount of sediment delivered by the Mississippi River to its present Balize subdelta, but what seems the most carefully considered and acceptable of these indicates an average of possibly more than two million tons each day.

One can get a graphic picture of the subsidence of the Mississippi delta—which includes the one-hundred-and-fifty-mile stretch from the Pearl River, separating Louisiana from Mississippi, to the Vermilion River, where the prairie lands begin, and which consists of numerous subdeltas, the most recently established of which being those near and below New Orleans—by glancing at a few established facts and at the result of recent geologic work.

Mr. Elmer Lawrence Corthell, while directing the construction of the Eads jetties in the Mississippi's South Pass, visited, in about the year 1876, the old Spanish magazine (warehouse and arsenal) built of brick in 1767 near where the mouth of Balize Bayou then was. He found the magazine so far submerged that the door sill was "at least ten feet below the water." An examination made twenty years later at Corthell's direction showed only part of the roof remaining above water; and now it has disappeared, even its location being lost.

Two miles above this Spanish magazine was the French Balise, much later to become American Balise, used as a pilot's settlement until the 1860's. The shell streets of this town, which at one time had a population of 500 or more, now lie four feet below the marsh surface but are still as level as when they were used.

At many places in the South Louisiana marshes cypress, now become scarce on the surface, is probed for, dug up and used.

But the most spectacular picture of the inconceivable amount of the Mississippi silt and the effect of its stupendous weight on the earth's crust is drawn from an authoritative estimate based on recent evidence from oil-well drilling near Vermilion Bay. According to this estimate, silt has been progressively deposited and depressed to a present depth of perhaps six miles below sea level since the last days of the dinosaurs and largely since the completion of the elevation of the Rocky Mountains.

After most of the channel of the Metairie-Gentilly stream had been filled, the channels of the Shupic Atcha (Bayou St. John) and the Chef Menteur Pass were cut through, crossing the course of this old river bed. The relative ages of these two waterways are not known.

The Shupic Atcha channel was cut to the lake as a result, perhaps, of the inability of what is now called Bayou Bienvenu to carry off, from the area that afterward became New Orleans, the floods that increased locally, decade after decade, as the Mississippi, which long since had moved on to develop its succeeding subdeltas, built its levees ever higher. These natural levees made it impossible for the surface water to drain into the Mississippi. Bayou Bienvenu was the swamp-drainage bayou of this area, its course (well south of the Gentilly channel) being generally easterly and probably extending considerably beyond the present

location of Lake Borgne, where it emptied. Bayou Bienvenu still carries off a large percentage of the surface water from New Orleans, every drop of which has to be pumped out of this now levee-surrounded city, parts of which are below the level of the sea.

It seems probable that the opening of the Chef resulted from an interruption of the flow in the then outlet of Lake Pontchartrain, much east of the present Rigolets, occasioned by a deltaic adjustment of the Pearl River, which, from time to time, during many thousands of years before the Metairie-Gentilly channel came into being, dumped its silt into the area including Lake St. Catherine.

Within the bed of the erstwhile main river channel, both east and west of the Shupic Atcha, there was, in 1700, a narrow watercourse meandering between the natural levees of the ancient stream. Along the crests of these grew wide-spreading oaks with low-hanging branches from which trailed the long, swaying, gray tendrils of "Spanish beard" or "moss" which, spread on floor or rack, made comfortable beds for the Indians in their palmetto-thatched huts. Some individuals among those huge trees covered the greater part of an acre.

Under them in dry seasons the ground was hard and cracked; elsewhere the ridges were covered by a profusion of lesser trees, bamboo cane, small plants and flowers. These natural levees afforded ideal places for the Indians to camp after their annual crossing from the pine lands that lay to the north. At the foot of the ridges, toward the bayou, there was a lush growth of cattails, reeds and great plumed grasses, groups of purple-blue iris and, here and there, white or pink marsh mallows.

Some distance down each of the outer slopes, where the ground was wet for part of the year, there was a dense growth of palmetto palms, bay and gum trees, masses of tall, close-set cane and mats of blackberry, laced together by trumpet and tie vines, an almost impenetrable tangle except along the banks of sluggish little tributaries of the Shupic Atcha, where the wild creatures made paths that man could follow by frequently stooping low. And this rank growth extended back to the deep swamp, where the grayish boles of majestic cypresses towered to their feathery crests, high above the black water that reflected the naked, satiny-

red tips of their grotesque "knees," rising here and there and in groups above the shining surface of the quiet water.

Among these cypress knees rested the "shupics" (mudfish), from which the Shupic Atcha got its name. Indians, wading among the knees, speared these fish with sharpened canes.

The portage from the Shupic Atcha to the Mississippi followed, for about half its course, such a path as we have described, along a little bayou now long forgotten which ran about to where Claiborne Avenue is today. This part of the way became known as Bayou Road, the name by which the street that follows this route is now called. From where it ended there was water up to a man's knees until the ground began to rise slowly a few hundred yards from the river. So hard to follow was this best known of Indian portages that several of Iberville's men lost themselves on it and spent a cold winter's night within a few hundred yards of the river camp. From this incident the trail was sometimes called "The Portage of the Lost."

When Iberville and his sixty men reached the Mississippi along this way in 1700 we imagine he little dreamed that on the site of Chinchuba his brother Bienville would build a city, some eighteen years later, with the aid of the engineer Pauger and the opposition of nearly everyone else, a city which would see the destiny of the United States fought out almost within its own borders.

Iberville ascended the river and decided that the present site of Natchez was the most suitable place at which to establish the principal city of the province. There in March, 1700, Iberville selected a high spot which he laid out for a town, prenatally called Rosalie. Sixteen years later Bienville erected a **fort** there and called it Fort Rosalie. But he put his **town** not there but at Chinchuba; and time has shown how sound his judgment was.

In the interim, between January, when Iberville reached Chinchuba, and March, when he was at the present site of Natchez, he had had the little fort which he called La Boulaye built on an elevated spot some twenty-five or more miles below Chinchuba. A contemporary map made by Iberville's brother Serigny locates it on what is now called Jesuit Bend, on the west side of the river among the Chaouachas. Remonville in 1702 referred to it as being eleven leagues below the Bayou St. John portage, on the west

side of the river, and suggested that it be changed to the east side at the Bayou St. John portage.

Serigny was an officer in the French navy who, it would seem, could be relied upon to know one side of the river from the other.

Iberville spoke of La Boulaye as being on the right side of the river. The designations right and left when applied to the sides of a river have always meant one's right or left when facing downstream. In this case the right side would be the west side. A later map, made by Borreman in 1722, shows the fort still in existence, though not garrisoned, and on the west side.

Blockhouses, surrounded by palisades, were erected in many places at various times, especially after the Natchez massacre, by planters; so, remains of such a structure found on the east side of the Mississippi are not necessarily to be accepted as remains of Fort La Boulaye.

Even so, there is evidence to indicate that La Boulaye was on the New Orleans side of the river; and there it would have been more convenient to reach, and we can see no reason for setting it on the west side and adding to the difficulties of supplying it from Biloxi and Mobile. So much for this moot question.

In February, 1700, while Fort La Boulaye was being built, the Sieur Le Sueur arrived at Chinchuba from Biloxi to meet de Tonti, upon whose arrival from the Illinois country they were to start upriver on an expedition of exploration. De Tonti went first to Biloxi with six canoe loads of beater pelts, which he and his companions sold on February 16. He then joined Le Sueur at Chinchuba.

For two years men and supplies may have passed through Chinchuba between La Boulaye and Ship Island. Then the French moved from Old Biloxi to the Mobile River, and supplies were shipped from Dauphin Island at the mouth of Mobile Bay, a much longer trip. In 1707, for lack of barges, the problem of supplying La Boulaye became still more difficult, and the fort was abandoned.

Thereafter Chinchuba undoubtedly saw few if any white faces until eleven years later, when the camp was aroused from its quiet by the arrival of Major General Pailloux with orders from Bienville to clear away the forest for the founding of New Orleans. He occupied the hut Bienville had built and set to work with a few laborers.

Unfortunately his men were of those who had been deported to Louisiana for transgressing French laws. Such men had even less than ordinary enthusiasm for the task of clearing away a dense forest in the heat of summer, at a place from which even Indians fled at that season of the year, where snakes, alligators and mosquitoes were more in evidence than food, shelter or pay.

Nearly a year later, in March, 1719, the new town consisted only of the hut Bienville had built, three others not yet finished, and a small warehouse. Little further progress was made, and at the end of another year the men were called away to build New Biloxi.

Weeds and bushes quickly covered the clearing at Chinchuba.

VII

Confusion

In 1718, while the French military and civil headquarters were still at Mobile and Dauphin Island, respectively, France, England and Holland patched up a treaty of peace to which France's former ally, Spain, would not subscribe. This brought about a new war, in 1719, this time between France and Spain.

On April 29 of that year instructions reached Bienville to seize Pensacola. With a few soldiers and a few hundred Indians he came upon the little Spanish fort and its thatch-roofed settlement by land while his brother Serigny approached by water. Pensacola surrendered without resistance.

However, this conquest was short-lived, for a Spanish fleet of war sailed in only a few months later and drove the French out of Pensacola. Bienville feared that, after this victory, the Spaniards would retaliate by attacking Mobile. Hastily he put Dauphin Island in a state of defense; and when the anticipated Spanish fleet arrived it had to retire again.

Later in the same year a French fleet arrived at Mobile under Champmeslin, and Bienville, with its help, retook Pensacola after a brisk fight. This time he burned the fort and settlement and established a battery on the point of St. Rose Island where Fort Pickens now stands at the mouth of the harbor.

At last the French had the fine deep-water harbor which Iberville had wanted nearly a score of years before. But now, beyond capturing it, as he was ordered to do, Bienville had no interest in it. Pensacola lay some ten miles east of the Perdido River, too far away from the Mississippi to be of any protection to that vital highway of the province. From his point of view the only benefit there was in taking Pensacola was that it rid his neighborhood of enemies. It did not solve the problem of finding a substitute for the harbor at Mobile, which Bienville had at-

tempted to solve by beginning operations at Chinchuba the year before.

Toward the end of 1719, only a few months after the capture of Pensacola, the Company of the West began the allotment of land to any except Protestants and Jews who would undertake to improve it either personally or by proxy. John Law selected for himself some nine square miles of delta land on the Red River; Hubert, the civil head of the government in Louisiana, chose a large concession on the Mississippi at Natchez; Bienville asked for some twelve square miles of overflow land near New Orleans.

The governing body in Louisiana, called the Superior Council, made the allotments and then submitted them to the new king, Louis XV, for ratification. Thus when Hubert suggested stopping work at New Orleans and building the new capital at Natchez the council suspected him of self-interest. Bienville could not be suspected in the same way because he had made known his preference nearly two years before he selected his land in that neighborhood; yet the council was inclined to balk at deciding in favor of either Natchez or New Orleans as the proper location for a new harbor. Finally it adopted the suggestion from France that they return to the site which Iberville had originally chosen at Old Biloxi.

As conditions had changed completely in the meantime there was no wisdom at all in returning to that place. Iberville, twenty years before, had felt it advisable to hide his little settlement from the Spaniards, by situating it behind Deer Island, even though the harbor was twelve miles away, at Ship Island, and the water along the shore too shallow for even small lighters to dock near the fort to unload; but now there were no Spaniards to fear. Besides, there was nothing at Old Biloxi to return to as the huts and the fort had been destroyed. The water for drinking purposes came from the springs that were sulphurous or from ponds that at times became stagnant. And a settlement at Biloxi would furnish no protection to the Mississippi River.

Meanwhile the Company of the West was trying to find the large number of people it had engaged to settle annually in Louisiana. In an effort to persuade enough of them to make the venture it represented the opportunities for making fortunes, and the living conditions, in Louisiana as little short of marvelous. Mines of

precious stones and metals were said to lie underfoot as one walked, and a drawing of New Orleans was circulated which made it resemble more a beautifully wrought and jeweled ornament than a town, though at that time there was no town, beautiful or otherwise, and even a site for it had not yet been selected.

Deluded people flocked across the ocean to Louisiana by shiploads, but as there were not enough of these willing ones, unwilling ones were kidnaped, "shanghaied" and exiled to the colony, and slaves were dragged out of Africa. All these were dumped on the unprepared white sands of the Gulf Coast, first on Dauphin Island and, after 1719, on Ship Island and at Biloxi.

What Bienville was to do with all these people was more than the company or the French government knew or seemed to care; during twenty years the thin stream of people which had trickled into Louisiana had been left, by a corrupt government, to starve; not that the necessary money to feed them had not been appropriated, but because much of that money had promptly found its way into the pockets of French officials. Several times Bienville had found it necessary to take advantage of Indian friendship and quarter his hungry troops among them.

Tragedy relieved the situation to some extent, for half the members of these human cargoes died on the way to Louisiana. One ship landed too far west, as had La Salle, and only a single survivor, after a long while, made his way back east to Mobile. Another ship, with a cargo of slaves, burned at sea.

Bienville again sent his soldiers out of camp and quartered them on his Indian friends out in the woods. To make themselves more welcome the soldiers took fiddles along and taught the Indian maidens the court dances of France. On hard, swept ground, under spreading magnolia and oak, Frenchmen in shirts and knee breeches, and graceful Indian girls wearing only bracelets on arms and strings about the waist supporting pads of moss, introduced to half-famished Amichel the light spirit of the better-fed French of Europe.

During the first decade of French occupation of Louisiana the Cure La Vent had suggested that instead of France sending female derelicts to marry in Louisiana, the men be permitted to marry these Indian girls; and it was not until 1716 that the idea was frowned upon by the Marine Board, on the ground that as the

Indian girls were "too dissolute and very bad Christians" their children would be "even more dishonest"—which seems to suggest the fear that a purebred Indian's child could only be the worse for an infusion of French blood.

A new clearing was made among the giant pines at Old Biloxi, on the high ground where the shore line runs a little west of north before turning farther west. Houses were set at all angles, mostly in two groups, at the north and south ends of the clearing.

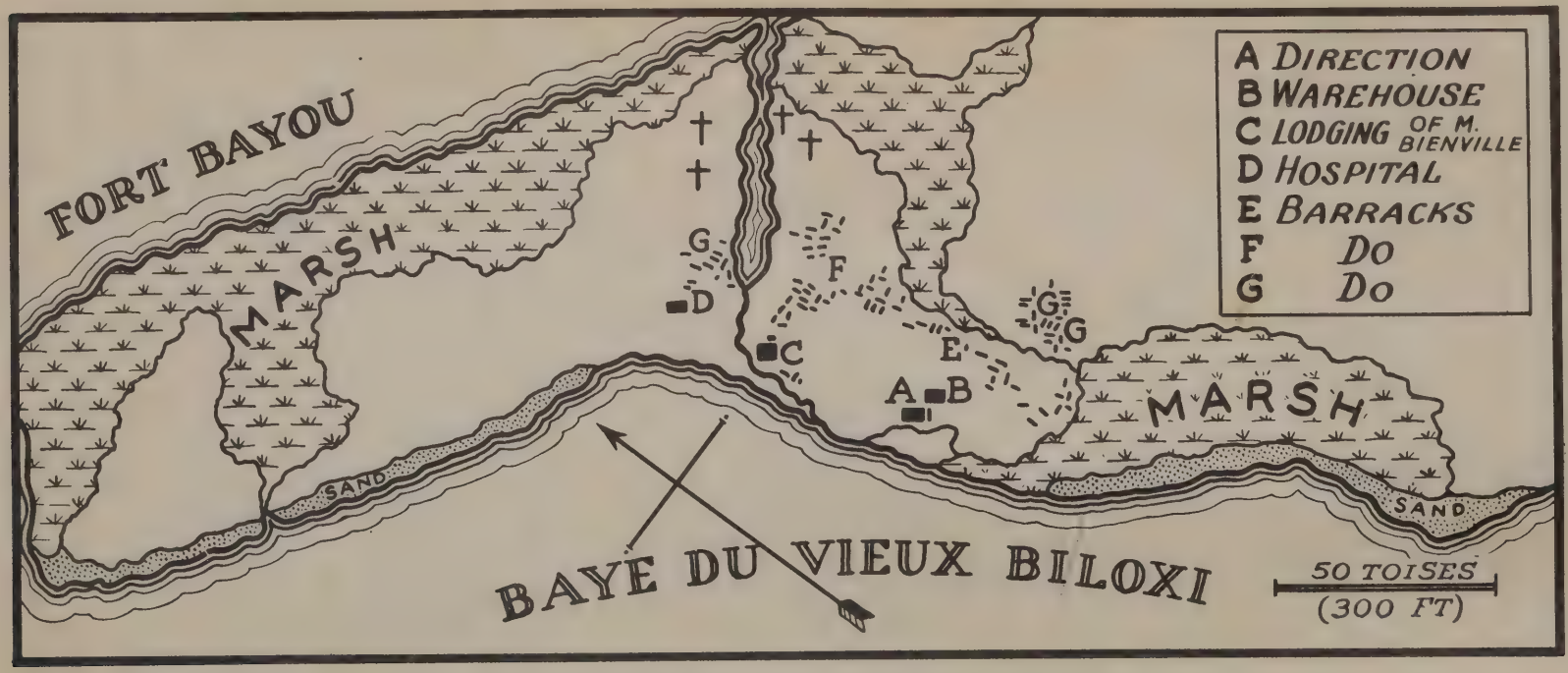
No fort was built, but a hospital was set on the north side of the ravine, a hundred yards back from the water of the Bay.

On either side of the ravine, to the back, facing the marshes and Fort Bayou, the dead were buried. Somewhere nearby is the grave of Sieur de Sauvole, Louisiana's first governor, who died away back in 1701.

Perhaps the digging of graves turned up a salt and arid subsoil, for which reason the forest has never reclaimed this old French burying ground; nature has preserved as a field this spot which, for the lack of stone, and the problem of keeping alive the living, the French left unmarked.

In the whole province there were not enough boats of light draft to transport these shiploads of colonists, with their food, clothing, bedding, tools, seeds and agricultural implements, to their far-scattered concessions of land, where they might begin to plant gardens and feed themselves. At Biloxi there were no prepared fields in which to plant; only the virgin forest lay beyond the little clearing in which the few huts and storehouses were set. The land was poor, there was no fertilizer, and there were no draft animals to plow with.

Some colonists had brought food to tide them over until a crop could be made on the concessions to which they expected to be transported at once. While they awaited transportation at Biloxi this provender was eaten either by themselves or taken by the authorities to be fed to others. Hundreds, with little or nothing to eat, and no houses to live in, sickened and died from hunger and exposure. Many, weakened by starvation, wandered out into the shallow water for oysters and never returned to the shore.



From "Plat De Vieux Biloxi" LeBlond de La Tour, 1721

By Laville Bremer 1939

Some of the settlers were destined for concessions as far away as Arkansas, and each family required several boats to carry themselves, the rowers, the guard of soldiers and the goods and equipment necessary for making a start in a wilderness. The way was slow, against the current of the Mississippi, and stops had to be made during unfavorable weather. A number of boats had to be left on the Mississippi for the use of the settlers, and it took a long time for the others to make their way back to Biloxi; some were lost, and others were riddled by the teredo—the marine worm that destroys ship's bottoms when they are not frequently painted. Boats also were needed to bring in the human and other cargoes from Ship Island. There were not that many boats in the province.

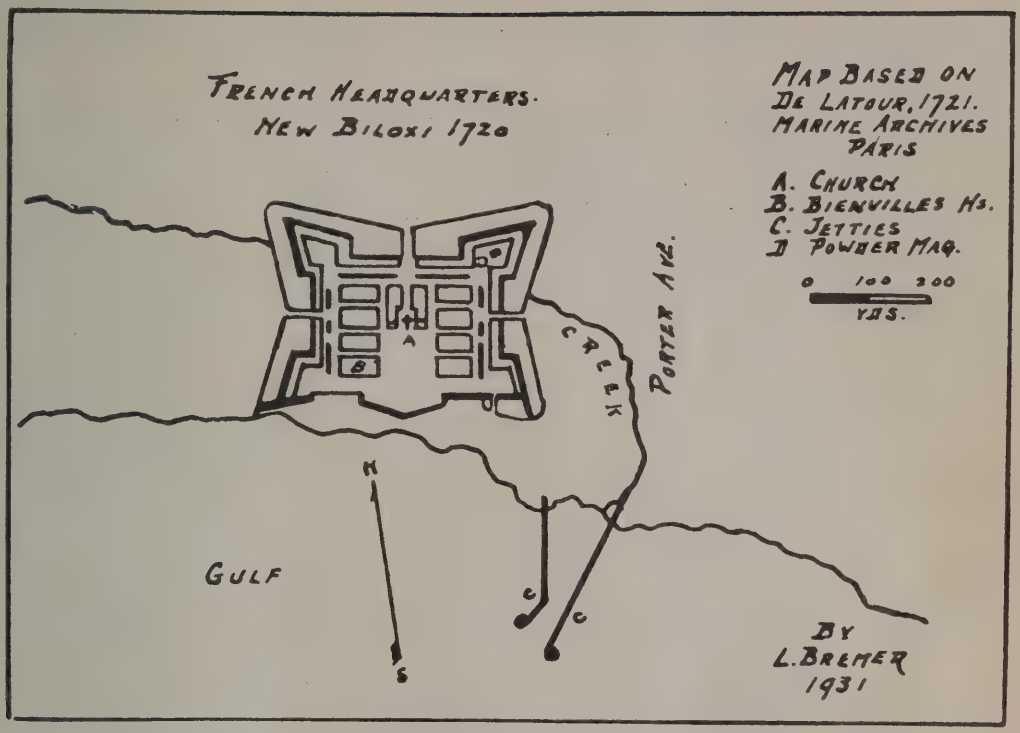
Le Blond de Latour, the engineer in chief who had recently arrived from France with a corps of engineers and a number of laborers, recommended moving again, this time to the west side of the bay, where he had found an elevated spot and good water opposite the channel to Ship Island. He wrote France: "The site is surrounded by a running stream which comes from a spring whose waters are clear, clean and very good, and which does not dry up at all. It is opposite the Ship Island roadstead three leagues away . . . I have planned two jetties . . . and am having the stream directed into it which will not fail to dig it out" (and permi lighters to dock at a wharf near the shore).

As if to hasten the council in its decision to leave Old Biloxi, the coals from a tipsy man's pipe set fire to his shack, and of the few huts standing at Old Biloxi thirteen went up in smoke.

Without waiting for formal permission from France the council adopted the engineer's recommendation. Boispinel, one of de Latour's engineers, with a crew of two hundred and ten Swiss and German soldiers, was set to work building the new headquarters in December, 1719. Progress at Chinchuba was stopped and the laborers recalled and put to work at New Biloxi early in 1720.

The central features of the capital at New Biloxi resembled those of old French New Orleans, which was begun about a year later. Buildings faced three sides of a square, or parade ground, with the water on the fourth (south) side.

In the middle of the line of buildings at the rear, facing the open square, was the chapel, on the left of which were quarters for a priest. On the other side stood the guardhouse. On the sides


FRENCH HEADQUARTERS.
NEW BILOXI 1720
MAP BASED ON
DE LATOUR, 1721.
MARINE ARCHIVES
PARIS
A. CHURCH
B. BIENVILLES HS.
C. JETTIES
D POWDER MAG.
0 100 200
YDS.
PORTER AVE.
CREEK
GULF
BY
L. BREMER
1931

of the parade ground were administration and barrack buildings.

Bienville's house, the first on the west side, stood about five hundred yards from what is now Porter Avenue, on a spot just east of the present cemetery, and a hundred yards back from the water.

The first house on the opposite side was for Director General Hubert. Inland from Bienville's house were quarters for the engineers and army officers. Forming a second row, at the back of all, were the kitchens. The powder magazine was isolated north of the encircling stream to the rear at the east. The hospital was located on Deer Island, less than a mile away.

On October 1, Loubois, the commander at Dauphin Island, and Delamarque, the commander at Pensacola, were ordered by Bienville to Old Biloxi, where he retained the military headquarters until September of the next year, 1721.

Until 1718 France sent to Louisiana chiefly soldiers, vagabonds, illicit salt makers and culprits of one sort or another. After 1718 the company began to add agriculturists. In 1721 it added three useful classes to these, namely, properly raised women, industrious Germans, and slaves.

Antoine Crozat, who had held the previous monopoly on Louisiana's commerce, had been privileged to import slaves to the colony, but it does not appear that he availed himself of the permit. Perhaps a cargo of slaves could not have been disposed of to the handful of desperately poor, nonagricultural, settlers and French civil servants at Mobile.

In 1718, however, the new company despatched two ships, the Aurora and the St. Louis, to Africa for slaves to be delivered at Dauphin Island. Undoubtedly these were the first importations of slaves to Louisiana. Previously Indians had captured and brought to Mobile a score of negroes from Carolina, and had sold them as slaves in Louisiana.

It has been stated that the Aurora and St. Louis landed their human cargoes at Pensacola; but this is very doubtful in view of the fact that the slaves were originally consigned to Dauphin Island, and, when they sailed, Spain was in possession of Pensacola and on bad terms with France. War was not declared until January of the following year, and Pensacola changed hands several times during the spring and summer. Furthermore, that isolated

Lighthouse at Biloxi, "Fort Louis" was located on knoll on west side of street (Porter Avenue) 1720-1727. Capital of Louisiana 1720-1722.

Fort Pike, on Rigolets. Here, going west, the Prairie Tremblant (trembling prairie) begins.

extremity of the province was remote from every land grant on which they could have been used.

We may note that these shipments arrived on the Gulf exactly one hundred years after the first slaves had been landed in Virginia, on the Atlantic Coast.

In 1720 Louis XV ordered the shipment of undesirable women to Louisiana stopped, and he directed a bishop to supervise the selection of women to be sent, who were to become the wives of the better class of settlers now in the province.

Accordingly some eighty-odd girls, who had been reared and educated in a Catholic institution for the poor, were embarked on the ship La Baleine in charge of Sisters Gertrude, Louise and Bergere. All arrived at New Biloxi in March, 1721.

Each was provided with a marriage outfit of clothes which she carried in a little box, or "cassette;" from which circumstance they were called Filles de Cassette.

It has been said that New Orleans had the honor of receiving the first Cassette Girls in 1728. However, it seems improbable that Pennicault, who was in Biloxi and chronicled their arrival, was mistaken about the cassettes, or that the king's order to ship only a better class of women to Louisiana was ignored for seven years. Furthermore, notes made on the margin of the official list of these eighty-odd young women of 1721, giving reasons for the cancellation of a few, shows that some attention was being paid to the character of those selected to go to Biloxi.

The confusion about them has probably arisen from the circumstance that on board the Baleine, along with the eighty cassette girls, were twenty-one women of the former sort—apparently a hold-over lot that had previously been named to go. The latter were dropped off separately at Mobile on the same day and by the same ship, and sent to the Chaumont grant at Pascagoula. Also Bienville complained of those who were received at Biloxi, saying that if they were all that they should have been when selected in France, they had "deteriorated on the way" and "were beyond control." But he even complained of two of the three nuns in whose charge they had come to America .

In their favor we may record that they were married off at the promising rate of three or four a week. This contrasted very favor-

ably with M. Clairambault's selection of virtuous but "ugly and ill-made" girls in 1713.

We are indebted to John Law for the coming of the Germans as he engaged them for his own estate in Arkansas. The first evidently arrived in 1719, for we find them at work on the New Biloxi headquarters late in that year. Comparatively few of them ever reached Law's plantation. During 1720 a group of Germans established a settlement on the Mississippi; this was the first settlement of their race on the "German Coast," about twenty-five miles above New Orleans on the west side of the river.

Before the last Germans sailed for Louisiana Law's company had failed and Law had fled from France. Hence, these last Germans came to Louisiana as independent colonists in charge of Carl Friedrich D'Arensburg. It was he also who brought the news of Law's failure to Louisiana.

These Germans founded Carlstein, the second village of the German Coast, near the first. The French named the two settlements "Des Allemands," by which the combined towns are known today. Though the family names have been given French spellings and sounds one may see, while passing through Des Allemands, numbers of children with the blond hair that testifies to their descent from those Germans of two hundred years ago.

Law's ideas, like those of many other historic men of vision, were capable of producing either good or bad results, depending on their application. They resulted in disaster because human stupidity and greed seem to know no bounds. His ideas were carried to ludicrous and dishonest extremes by the company, the government and the people, rich and poor and of both high and low degree. All joined in a hysteria of speculation in the stock of Law's company. The possible resources of Louisiana were ignored while the opportunity lasted to manipulate the speculative price of the company's stock, which was driven up to sixty times its par value.

The depreciated French paper money was exchanged for stock; the company turned this money back to the government in exchange for four percent bonds. This might have been well enough had not the government, thus relieved of its first issue of paper money, printed more, with which to pay off remaining creditors, who invested their new paper money in more stock of

the company. No province, even had it contained the gold and silver of Mexico and Peru, could have made secure such staggering issues of stocks, bonds and paper money.

France made peace with Spain in 1720, and Spain immediately crossed the Rio Grande into territory that was claimed by France. La Bahia was established on the site of La Salle's unfortunate venture of thirty-five years before, on San Bernardo Bay—then the best-known port on the French coast west of Galveston Island. Furthermore, Bienville was instructed to return Pensacola to Spain; but this he did not do until 1723. There was not a mounted cannon on the coast, and the nearest so-called fort, at Natchez, had gone to ruin. The Mississippi lay entirely unprotected. There was no concentration of settlers anywhere for the purpose of mutual aid or protection, nor had provision been made for the distribution of arms or supplies throughout the great area over which France scattered her provincials in the hope that by so doing she could claim a greater extent of territory and gather a greater quantity of pelts. Those who had begun to collect about Bienville's New Orleans learned of Hubert's opposition and displeasure and tactfully withdrew to respectful distances from it on river and bayou.

A picture of their condition at this time may be gained from a statement (Etat de la Louisiane) dated June, 1720:

> There are on that side (meaning the New Orleans side of the Mississippi River) forty plantations begun by invalids (evidently settlers making tentative efforts to establish themselves in agriculture) who, to judge by appearances, will not make good.
>
> Of these forty concessions only two will be able to produce crops this year; one belongs to the Sieur Lery (De Lery, the leader of the Canadian Chauvin brothers), who, in March, had already sowed two casks of rice; the other to the Sieurs Massy and Guenot, who have sowed as much. These forty plantations have among them about thirty head of horned cattle and eighty slaves, savages and blacks.
>
> M. de Bienville, Commander of Louisiana, also has a plantation there in which he has put twenty slaves, blacks and savages, and six head of horned cattle. He has sowed half a cask of rice.

This was six months after the Chauvins had been granted their land on the Mississippi River, above Nine-Mile Point.

Seventeen months later the census of 1721 showed that the three Chauvins had among them one hundred and nine slaves, one hundred and five head of horned cattle and seven horses. De Lery had a French servant, and his brother Lafreniere had five French servants.

The plantation lines of those first successful Canadian planters are marked today on the map of New Orleans and its vicinity by streets and canals, from above Nine-Mile Point downriver for approximately six miles. The lines of the unsuccessful planters have long since disappeared.

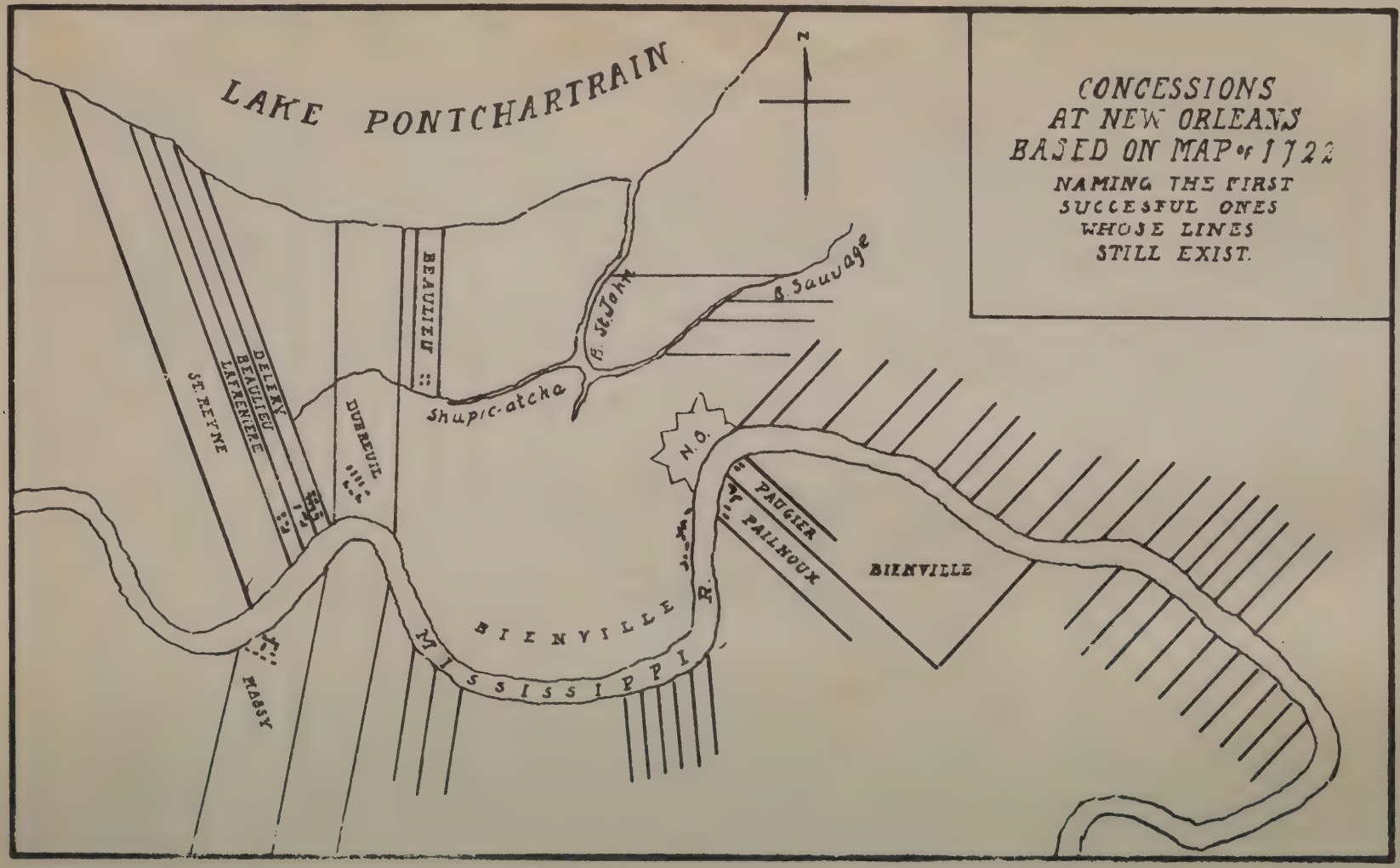
When Bienville had originally suggested setting New Orleans at the Chinchuba portage there was some discussion as to whether it should be on the bayou or on the river. Promptly Hubert secured for himself a concession of land five hundred feet deep lying along the portage two thousand feet.

During the next year, when many concessions were being occupied along both the Mississippi and the Shupic Atcha, Hubert established a depot or commissary adjoining, or on, his concession and put Dubuisson in charge. Supplies reached it through Lake Pontchartrain and Bayou St. John because it was contended that a ship could not enter the river for lack of water over the bar.

Bienville, still bent on setting the principal city of the province at Chinchuba, especially now that the Spaniards were encroaching on Louisiana territory in the west, insisted, in 1721, that soundings be made at the mouth of the river.

Though the Superior Council as a whole was opposed to this his request could hardly be refused, and Pauger was sent to make the survey. De Latour, his superior, though opposed to Bienville's object, decided that If Pauger's report on the depth of water in the passes was too favorable he could easily pigeonhole it—and that would be the end of the matter; France need never kknow, and neither should Bienville.

Anticipating some such trickery Bienville caused a secret copy of Pauger's report to be made for himself; and when he discovered its favorable nature he insisted that the council send a ship through. The council, ignorant of the secret report, warned him that if the ship were lost the council would hold him per-


LAKE PONTCHARTRAIN
N
CONCESSIONS
AT NEW ORLEANS
BASED ON MAP of 1722
NAMING THE FIRST
SUCCESFUL ONES
WHOSE LINES
STILL EXIST.
B. Sauvage
B. St. John
BEAULIEU
Shupic-atcha
DELERY
BEAULIEU
LAFRENIERE
ST. REYNE
DUBREUIL
N.O.
PAUGER
PAILHOUX
BIENVILLE
BIENVILLE
R.
MISSISSIPPI
MARSY

sonally responsible for it. Bienville agreed to this, and the ship, La Dromidare, got through without difficulty.

Promptly Bienville forwarded his copy of Pauger's report to the French government with an account of the success of the Dromidare. As de Latour had not forwarded the original the government now ordered him to do so.

Taken by surprise de Latour wrote a letter to France in which he now recommended the Chinchuba site for New Orleans, enclosed the report, and carefully antedated his letter to make it appear that it had been written before he received the request for it. This got him out of his difficulty very nicely.

But it was different with Hubert; ignorant of what was going on he worked against Chinchuba secretly through his clerk Dubuisson.

De Latour now commissioned Pauger to draw plans for what is now the famed Vieux Carre of New Orleans, and when they were completed he sent Pauger to lay out the town.

Upon Pauger's arrival, in March or April of 1721, he found at the spot where New Orleans had been begun in 1718, "only the old hut of M. de Bienville" and "three Canadian houses among bushes and clumps of trees." These were in Pailloux' abandoned clearing, which covered an area of about four squares. When Pauger placed the town this open area became its extreme lower corner.

Every now and then, nowadays, some magazine or newspaper publishes a reproduction of a picture purporting to represent New Orleans as it was about that time; but the sketch was made in France by an artist who had never seen the place, and it is entirely misleading.

It is picturesque to say that Bienville laid out New Orleans with the point of his sword; but this, too, is not so. It was Pauger who laid it out.

Before Pauger's arrival Dubussion assigned lots to himself, his relatives and his friends. Later, when one of Pauger's lines nicked a corner from a lot claimed by the married sister of Dubuisson the defrauded lady assaulted Pauger and tried to slap his face. It is related that the astonished engineer warded off Mme. Bonnaud's blows and, being a gentleman, retaliated only by calling her a sow. Pailloux, the town major, had to interfere

to prevent a duel between Pauger and the irate husband of Mme. Bonnaud.

Unfortunately, Pauger had no money with which to pay his laborers; in fact, there was no specie current in the colony except some copper coins which had just been received at Biloxi from France. This was of such small denominations and so bulky that the people would not have it, and amused themselves by throwing it at birds and fishes.

This gave Dubuisson an opportunity to stop the work at New Orleans; Pauger's men were being fed by the government through Hubert and Dubuisson, and when the latter told the men that they did not have to work if they did not want to, they all quit.

Pauger then appealed to Pailloux for men, and the major lent him ten soldiers and an officer for two weeks. These fell to work with such good will that Pauger soon had some lines run and a clearing made in which he allotted building sites to those who would undertake to build houses for themselves.

Once more Dubuisson interfered, declaring that he, as town clerk, alone had the right to assign building lots; and it appears that in an effort to establish his previous assignments he urged his relatives and friends to build on their lots at once.

When Pauger appealed to Bienville the latter took the matter direct to the council. And as de Latour was now committed, by his report to France in favor of Chinchuba, the council confirmed Pauger's allotments. The opposition of Hubert and Dubuisson had served only to discredit Hubert, who was soon recalled to France.

In Paris he claimed to be in favor of Chinchuba now, but he had said and done too much; perhaps it was fortunate for him that he died soon after his recall.

The date of the founding of New Orleans is set by some as 1717, the year in which it was decided that a post of that name should be set either on the Mississippi or west of it, and two officers for the town were appointed.

Others date its founding from 1718, the year in which Bienville received his commission as military governor, selected Chinchuba as the site for New Orleans and built a hut for himself there.

A third contention might be that New Orleans was not founded until 1721, when it was found practical to send ships up the river,

when the plans had been drawn, the exact location determined by Pauger, and all opposition ended.

We leave the reader to decide this moot point for himself.

VIII

French New Orleans and "The Chapitoulas"

When Pauger's distribution of land parcels in New Orleans was upheld by the council, he, now master of the situation, proceeded to tear down the houses that had been built at random against his orders by Dubuisson and others and forced them to begin over again and to place the buildings in accordance with his plan. Pauger was autocratic, and even admitted it, but he said it was necessary.

Circumstances did not, however, force him to appropriate to his personal uses land that had been given to Bienville two years before. Nevertheless, in 1721, without submitting his desires or intentions to the properly constituted authority—the Superior Council—he took, for a plantation, the point of land on the west side of the Mississippi directly opposite New Orleans now called Algiers.

This high-handed act came glaringly to light when, in 1724, the company wished to acquire that particular spot and negotiated for it with its rightful owner, Bienville. The latter was willing to let them have it and asked he council to eject Pauger, saying that there was plenty of land for Pauger nearby, just above Pailloux' plantation next door.

Pauger objected vigorously to being ousted and said that in the first place he had already improved the point, and secondly that even without it Bienville had more land than enough. But the council, feeling that Pauger's procedure had been too irregular, ordered that he vacate the premises and that Bienville reimburse him for the improvements. This, apparently, neither of them cared to do, so there the matter rested.

It would have been unfortunate indeed had these two men, who were almost wholly responsible for the building of New Orleans, fallen out as a result of this suit. To them credit should

be given for their wisdom and determination both in selecting the best site and in carrying through their plans against all opposition, and they were big enough to forgive and forget and remain friends. Pauger was still in possession of the point of land he had taken from Bienville when he died in 1726, and in his will he left his gun and pistols to Bienville.

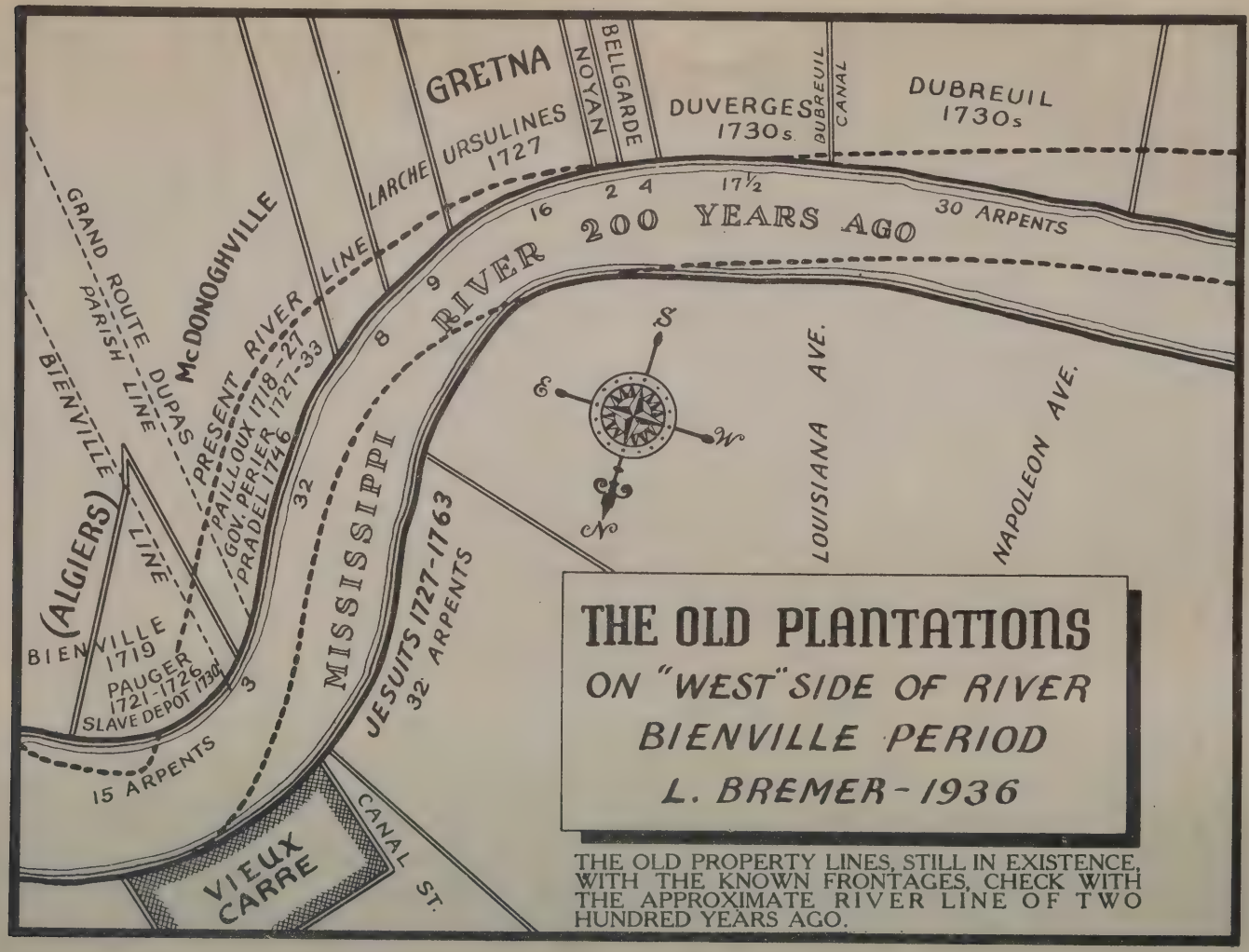
By November, 1721, after a single season's work, there were forty houses and one hundred and forty-eight private citizens in New Orleans; add to these the soldiers of the king, the employees of the company and the slaves and we have a grand total of four hundred and seventy souls, which was not a bad start.

On December 23 the company ordered the removal of headquarters from Biloxi to New Orleans; but these instructions did not reach Biloxi until May 26. Three months later (in August of 1722) Bienville had completed the official move, but the warehouse at Biloxi still contained supplies of every sort, as also did three ships that had been lying in the bay for more than a year.

Within a few weeks the hurricane of September 11 struck the Gulf Coast and the new town, leveling many of the frail huts at New Orleans and destroying the warehouse at Biloxi. The three ships lying in the bay were driven ashore and all the sorely needed supplies at both those points were lost. Starvation again threatened the little colony, but enough foodstuffs were collected from here and there to keep body and soul together while better buildings could be constructed at New Orleans. Those lost at Biloxi were never rebuilt.

A strange aftermath of this storm was the volunteer rice crop which followed the destruction of the planted crop; seed rice was carried from the fields to the surrounding swamps, and there, in the rich soil, it throve and matured early the following year, to the great benefit of the community.

Biloxi survived for another five years, due to the fact that a garrison remained there; but after these men were withdrawn in 1727 the old capital was deserted. In time even the site of "Fort" Louis was lost to memory and remained so for two hundred years. Later inhabitants of the Coast spoke of "Le Vieux Fort" which had stood at Old Biloxi, because a few pyramids of cannon balls and three foundered ships in the harbor remained to remind


GRETNA
NOYAN
BELLGARDE
DUVERGES 1730s
DUBREUIL CANAL
DUBREUIL 1730s
LARCHE
URSULINES 1727
GRAND ROUTE
PARISH LINE
DUPAS
McDONOGHVILLE
PRESENT RIVER LINE
PAILLOUX 1718-27
GOV. PERIER 1727-33
PRADEL 1746
16
2
4
17½
30 ARPENTS
200 YEARS AGO
9
8
32
MISSISSIPPI RIVER
BIENVILLE
(ALGIERS)
LINE
BIENVILLE 1719
PAUGER 1721-1726
SLAVE DEPOT 1730
3
15 ARPENTS
JESUITS 1727-1763
32 ARPENTS
LOUISIANA AVE.
NAPOLEON AVE.
VIEUX CARRE
CANAL ST.
THE OLD PLANTATIONS
ON "WEST" SIDE OF RIVER
BIENVILLE PERIOD
L. BREMER - 1936
THE OLD PROPERTY LINES, STILL IN EXISTENCE, WITH THE KNOWN FRONTAGES, CHECK WITH THE APPROXIMATE RIVER LINE OF TWO HUNDRED YEARS AGO.

them of it; but nothing remained at New Biloxi, and when the peninsula was repeopled the newcomers did not know that Fort Louis had ever existed, much less the exact spot where the capital of Louisiana had stood.

At New Orleans, in the beginning, the central square, called "Place d'Armes" (now Jackson Square), was but some forty paces from the river's brink, where the ground was highest.

Bienville's house, with its side to the Quay, stood four squares upriver from the Place d'Armes, facing what is now called Bienville Street. Between there and the square three streets—Conti, St. Louis and Toulouse—had been cut through for a distance of four squares back from the river, and three streets had been cleared on the other side of the square for the same distance back; but beyond these streets, in three directions, lay the forest, still a jungle of trees and tangled vines. The lines for a street had been run before Bienville's house but the forest growth had not been removed. He was evidently not of the type of the modern politician. Even as late as 1727, when the Ursuline nuns arrived in the province and were quartered in his house, during his absence in France, the street had not been cleared.

To carry off the surface water and dry out the ground on which the houses were to be built a small drain was dug around each lot, and these were connected with larger drains that surrounded each square. These in turn were connected and carried off the water to the lower swamp lands back from the river, at the rear of town. For this reason what are now called blocks or squares were originally, and appropriately, known in New Orleans as "islands."

The earth from these drains was thrown up to form a low, dry ridge, or bank, to walk on, and this gave rise to the custom, which still persists, of calling sidewalks "banquettes" (little banks) in New Orleans.

The forest that covered the district for miles in every direction was composed chiefly of cypress, a well-nigh imperishable though fairly soft wood that could be split easily into boards, shingles and pickets for house and fence construction. A man who would build a house or a fence for himself cleared a part of his street and secured his building material in that way. Clearing the street out to the middle was the property owner's task.

His house, or camp, was at first nothing better, perhaps, than four walls made of stakes driven into the soft ground, with a roof of bark or a thatch of palmetto leaves. Later he set a house of clapboards or sawed boards on the property line, in accordance with the law, slightly raised on blocks of wood, with steps leading down to the banquette. The effect of this law is still to be seen in the Vieux Carre section of New Orleans.

When all this was done, and a fence of cypress pickets as high as a man's head was constructed around the property, the owner became entitled to a free deed to it.

If the trees were as large as stumps elsewhere would indicate, they were as much as four feet through at several feet from the ground. Those men really earned their lots.

To the narrow cleared lanes, both short and boggy, such fine street names as Royal, Bourbon and Dauphine were given.

Floating in the balmy air were the spores of lichens and other fungi which attached themselves to woodwork, roofs and fences and quickly began a healthy growth. Thus an ancient appearance was soon imparted to houses that had become gray with exposure and the lack of paint. A building ten years old was for that reason called "the old house" of Mr. So-and-So.

There is a tale to the effect that Bienville one day came upon Pauger and de Latour quarreling about which of them should have a certain lot of material with which to build a house for himself. Bienville is said to have settled the argument by taking the material to build his own. Let us describe this finest of New Orleans houses:

It stood on the upper, woods (or lake) corner of Rue d'Anguin and the Quay (now Bienville and Decatur Streets) and was 21 by 32 feet in size, two stories high, and had a shingled roof. It contained eight rooms, and the window lights were of cloth instead of glass. In the yard behind it stood a kitchen built of stakes driven into the ground, with a roof of bark.

Another rather pretentious property, of which we have found a description, was the house of Captain de la Marque. It stood on a sixty-by-one-hundred-and-twenty-foot lot on Chartres Street and was forty feet in length, roofed with bark and surrounded by a gallery. It contained a hall with a fireplace, one room and two closets; and overhead there was a garret. Attached to it

were two courtyard wings, one for a kitchen, with three rooms, the other serving as a cellar and storeroom. House and lot sold for four thousand francs—about eight hundred dollars.

Tilling of the soil was done almost exclusively by hand, for want of horses and oxen; the census of 1721 showed only nine horses in the city, and thirty-six head of cattle. Beyond the city limits the planters were equally short of draft animals.

To make matters worse, the climate, during the planting and growing season, was hot, the ground and air damp, and there were clouds of gnats and mosquitoes.

The illnesses which these conditions brought on were aggravated by the incompetence of the physicians whom France sent to Louisiana. Their remedies, besides bleeding, included such unwelcome potions as "hipecac," dragon's blood, eyes of crabs and Water of the Queen of Hungary. Appraising a certain two physicians Bienville said, "While the second is as ignorant as the first he is less of a rogue." It is not surprising, therefore, that many people died soon after reaching Louisiana. Boispinel, the builder of New Biloxi, died in September, 1723; his chief, Le Blond de Latour, followed him a month later. Pauger died in 1727. This autocrat of New Orleans was buried, not in the churchyard, but in the parish church itself. His home had been on Chartres Street, between Conti and St. Louis, only a square back and down from Bienville's house.

What little trade there was in Louisiana was controlled by John Law's Company of the Indies (as it was renamed in 1718) until the "Bubble" burst and Law had to fly from France; thereafter the company functioned without Law for ten years. The inhabitants, dependent on it for supplies and slaves, and as an outlet for their furs, indigo and pitch, could seldom get out of debt to it. For that reason there was scarcely one who could dispose of a house or a slave or even a pot out of the kitchen without the consent of the local directors. Not only did these directors represent the company and the king but they recorded contracts, appointed executors and tutors, decided ordinary suits and heard capital cases. Hence we find among their records matters of all sorts, and expressed in their own way. For instance, there is the call of Sheriff Vincent upon M. De Verteuil to "appear on Saturday next and see himself sentenced; and M. Dugue's

acknowledgment of having sold to M. Durivage "two cows and a bull, the cows in a state of expectancy." After the tragedy at Fort Rosalie it was reported that "M. Kolly now finds himself included in the Natchez massacre." A man's mill was "prostrated" by a hurricane, and a sheriff "conveyed himself to Houma."

A far more serious affair involved a M. Gavin whom the Procurer General found guilty of a crime for which he was "hanged in effigy" since the accused "has disappeared." And there is the tragic record of a soldier who cut open his loaf of "munition bread," scrutinized it closely, and laid it back on the table without eating it. For this he was charged with mutiny, sedition and revolt, and was put to death before the assembled soldiers.

The French did not like corn meal, and bread for the soldiers was made of imported flour that was usually musty and weevily. Meats, at that early period, consisted chiefly of game, shot by professional hunters—usually Biloxi Indians, as they were the most successful. Other hunters were slaves kept for that particular purpose because few men had time to do their own hunting. Vegetables, fruits, milk, butter and eggs were produced on the home place or bought from the Germans at Des Allemands, who brought such articles to New Orleans once a week

Seasonings, herbs, baskets and ornaments made of Spanish silver coins were brought to the city by Choctaws from across Lake Pontchartrain.

With the exception of the soldiers and their officers, and the clerks and officials of the company, the population of New Orleans was made up of carpeners, wheelwrights, cabinet-makers, shoemakers, wigmakers, tailors, boatbuilders, timber-men, tar burners, cattlemen, liquor dispensers, keepers of pool halls and traders in hides and pelts.

Under the circumstances we might imagine that it was a motley, patched and threadbare lot who attended that first little wooden church that stood where the St. Louis Cathedral is now, or that first brick building in New Orleans, the church that followed it on the same spot between 1724 and 1728; but such a surmise would be far from correct, for we learn from invoices and inventories that there was no lack of finery among the people; in fact, there was an astonishing array of it, such as men's

coats, vests and knee breeches of silk, satin and velvet, in shades of blue, gray, yellow, red and cherry, with lace about the collars and cuffs, and buttons of silver and gold, and beaver hats. And for the women there were cambrics, dotted lawns, silks, Chinese and striped taffetas, embroidered petticoats and jackets, Antwerp laces, wristbands, silk stockings at the equivalent of $2.50 a pair, hats from Paris, powder, rouge and beauty spots.

We suspect that churchgoing was mixed with matchmaking when the people assembled on Sunday mornings bedecked in this gay attire, for there were always widows and widowers in the crowd; diseases and Indians made death a frequent visitor in those early Louisiana homes, and those who survived married again quickly and perhaps often. If one lived long enough it appears that to be thrice married was about the average; and records show not a few higher scores.

The most eligible men in the province—those who held positions with the government or the company—were among the most regular church attendants, for it was unwise in that day for such employees to be negligent of their religious duties; those in authority in France were sure to be informed of it.

But among those who did not hold government or company positions were some who were notable for their lack of piety. In 1726 the law had to be invoked to keep these away from saloons, pool rooms and card tables for even a little while (during Mass) on Sundays and feast days. So, next to the church — and on its right hand — there was set, in 1728, the second brick building in New Orleans — a jail. The mixture of piety and pleasure for which the city has been noted from its beginning seems to be symbolized by these first two brick buildings.

Above the city the area, up to Twelve-Mile Point, was known by the French as "The Chapitoulas." Both the district and the road that followed the river before it were named for what the Spanish called the "Tchoupitoulas" Indians, whose hunting ground this seems to have been.

Separating the Chapitoulas from the city was a triangle of open land known as the "Terre Commune" or public land, bordered on its upper side by a common road, now Common Street. The Chapitoulas road is now Tchoupitoulas Street as far as present-

day Audubon Park; the section for some distance above the park has been swallowed by the Mississippi River.

Below the Terre Commune the city's moat and palisades took up the space down to Bienville Street; Canal and Iberville Streets did not then exist; hence the Vieux Carre proper commences at Bienville Street.

In 1719, when many French dignitaries and officials applied to the company for, and were granted, huge tracts of land in Louisiana so that they might establish for themselves "fiefs" there comparable to those they held in France, Bienville was granted all of the Chapitoulas that lay between the common road and Nine-Mile Point. In addition to this he was granted a tract that included the point opposite the city on the west side of the river and the land below it extending downstream for several miles.

These areas, at the time, were cypress swamps, drained by a network of sluggish bayous and "branches" but under water much of the time.

Just how such domains were to be drained and brought into profitable use must have been more than the new owners understood; but the land was so fertile, and the conditions attending its acquisition so light, that people took up the properties first and considered their possible uses afterwards.

These grants to Bienville were confirmed by the company in France in 1720 and registered by the council in New Orleans in 1723.

Without waiting, however, for these formalities to be completed, Bienville, in 1719, began to clear and plant twenty arpents just above the common road. This he did with his own slaves, some of whom he had bought from the company, the others being those he had acquired in 1707 while French headquarters were still at Old Mobile on Twenty-seven Mile Bluff.

He named this plantation "Bel Air."

After the grants were confirmed and registered they were surveyed, and it was found that the Chapitoulas grant had a frontage of about nine miles on the Mississippi's curved shore line, with an average depth of the customary forty arpents. The two areas combined amounted to something like twelve square miles.

By then Bienville had already established a number of settlers on his Chapitoulas tract. Among them was his sister Barbe, his nephew Noyan and several Canadian friends; but the majority were Germans whom Law had established on his upriver plantation. When they learned that the "Bubble" had burst and that Law had fled the fury of the French populace, they made their way to New Orleans to seek transportation back to France. Many of them would have become charges on the company; but Bienville, with the consent of the council, established a number of them on his Chapitoulas estate and undertook to care for them until they should become self-supporting. He assigned to each family a small plot of from three to six arpents frontage on the river and extending back from it a distance of about forty arpents (an arpent of Paris being approximately 191 feet 10 inches).

He also supplied each family with tools for cultivation, live stock, and a year's supply of provisions. No rent would be required of them until they were established. Thereafter, however, he would expect a rental of from $1.20 to $1.60 a year for each arpent of frontage, and in addition to this a few capons and a stated number of days of free labor on his Bel Air plantation.

This was the opportunity Bienville's enemies in Louisiana had been waiting for. They charged him with land grabbing and extortion, and with an attempt to make serfs of his tenants, and they brought the whole matter to the attention of the king.

In his defense we may say that de la Pointe, on Mobile Bay, Mme. de Mezieres on the Bay of St. Louis, John Law in Arkansas, and many others had been granted, in the same regular manner, nine or more square miles each without having ever turned a hand in favor of the king or the province. And regarding the rent, can we say that it was too high when we consider the risks Bienville took? The days of free labor which he asked surely meant slave labor and not the labor of his tenants, since these slaves were easily acquired from the company; and his contracts with his Canadian friends were the same as those he made with the Germans.

Bienville looked well after his personal interests, but he never put them first, as did so many of the others. In all things he was the most moderate of those in authority in Louisiana, and in settling the Germans on his estate he gave evidence of thought

for the good of the company and the province, which the council approved.

Nevertheless it seems to have been easy to persuade the careless Louis XV of the dereliction of a trusted lieutenant, and Bienville's enemies succeeded in having him recalled to France in 1724. It was not until the following year that he could secure passage to Europe.

There is no record of his ever having been brought to trial.

When Bienville left Louisiana his duties were performed by his cousin Boisbriant, commander of the troops, for two years.

While thus unemployed Bienville disposed of a number of small pieces of land on both sides of the river through his kinsman, Noyan, who remained in Louisiana. The largest of these, his Bel Air plantation consisting of twenty arpents frontage on the river, he sold to the Jesuits in 1726. And he sold them an additional five arpents in 1728.

In this connection it may be of interest to point out that thereafter the Jesuits secured a third strip of land from Caesar Lebreton, consisting of seven arpents; thus the Jesuits bought thirty-two arpents in all. Above them, to Felicity Road, now Felicity Street, lay fifteen arpents belonging to De Hauterive. We mention this because it has been stated and believed that the Jesuit lands extended to Felicity Road, which was not the case.

In 1728 the king canceled all land grants on the Mississippi River from Baton Rouge to the Balize, and the council was ordered to regrant the land in small parcels only and to those alone who were living on the land and had improved a portion of it. As Bienville had been recalled to France and was, as a consequence, not living on his Louisiana property, he was defrauded of most of it and of the cost of staking the Germans on it, except for what he had received from the sale of a portion.

The Germans gradually withdrew from Bienville's estate and joined their fellow countrymen upriver at Des Allemands; a few of them remained long enough to get titles under the king's new orders and then dispose of their little farms to various Frenchmen and Canadians.

During the two years of Boisbriant's administration the colony continued to grow. The census of 1727 showed six times as many people in New Orleans as there had been in 1721, and

there was another horse, but there were five fewer cows. In the surrounding country the European population had doubled, the slaves were three times their former number, horses were multiplied by five, the cattle by six, and there were eight hundred and forty-three hogs as compared with "zero hog" in 1721.

Unfortunately for the province, Etienne de Perier had been appointed in 1726 to take Bienville's place as governor of Louisiana, and he arrived in the province in 1727. On March 15 he presented his credentials to the council and was inducted into office. Boisbriant and all other family connections of Bienville were dropped, and the tide soon began to ebb.

The English, always on the alert to win the Indians away from the French, were not slow in taking advantage of the absence of the astute Bienville, the parsimony of the company, and Perier's unfitness for handling Indians.

Perier, alarmed at the rumors he heard of a concerted Indian uprising against the French, and not knowing what else to do, made urgent appeals to France for more troops and munitions. One historian has said that Perier seemed anxious to begin a war with the Indians so that he might show France how skillfully he could end it. This appraisement of him seems almost just in view of Perier's selection of the tyrannical drunkard, Chepart, to command at Natchez among Indians whose friendship Bienville had won and kept with the greatest difficulty. The French people of Natchez warned Governor Perier that Chepart was cruel, drunk most of the time, and in every way unfit for the place. Perier recalled him, but after a short while made the tragic mistake of reinstating him.

One day Chepart's covetous eyes fell on the White Apple village of the Natchez, where, in their holy of holies, the Indians had kept a perpetual fire burning to their god since time forgotten. Chepart wanted this hill for a plantation and, to the great astonishment of the Indians, ordered them off. At first they could not believe the request had been made in earnest; but after talking with him, and pleading to no avail, they plotted the massacre of every Frenchman within reach.

An Indian woman gave warning to friends in the fort, and these in turn notified Chepart; but that stupid individual, instead

of giving heed, put his informants in irons for attempting to alarm and advise him.

On November 28, 1729, the Indians, gaining entrance to the fort and to private homes, on the pretext that they were organizing a hunt and needed powder, suddenly fell on the whites and killed all except a tailor and a carpenter who they thought might be useful to them. Those women who were soon to become mothers were killed; but the others, and the children, were carried off into slavery. The blacks also were carried off as slaves. The Natchez chief, declaring that Chepart was unfit to be killed by a warrior, had him clubbed to death by an Indian slave, and beheaded.

Two men who happened to be hunting at the time made their escape and brought word of the massacre to New Orleans.

Mustering what soldiers he could Perier put them under the command of Loubois, who had formerly commanded at Mobile and New Biloxi, and sent them against the Natchez Indians.

The Canadian, Le Sueur, leading some seven hundred Choctaw Indians, and gathering three hundred more as he went, reached Natchez ahead of Loubois. The Choctaws, unwilling to wait until Loubois could arrive, fell upon the Natchez and succeeded in rescuing fifty-one white women and children.

Perier remained meanwhile in New Orleans, awaiting the arrivel of additional troops under his brother, Perier de Salvert; and late the following summer he joined Loubois in a second campaign against the Natchez tribe.

Under a flag of truce he held a discussion with some of the Natchez chiefs; then, suddenly surrounding them with soldiers, he held them as hostages for the surrender of the whole tribe. Perier promised to spare the lives of all who gave themselves up, and in this way he captured some forty warriors and about four hundred women and children. All the other warriors, fearing to trust Perier after his violation of a truce, escaped. Those who surrendered he sold into slavery in Cuba. Not quite all of them, for he had a few executed as examples and permitted the Tunica Indians to burn to death one woman. Far from being ashamed of himself, he sought credit for the whole affair. Such was Etienne de Perier.

The year that brought him to Louisiana also brought a group of Jesuits and a number of Ursuine nuns, who reached the Mississippi in the ship Gironde in 1727. Transferred to smaller craft they arrived at New Orleans ahead of the ship on August 6 and 7.

The Ursulines were temporarily quartered in Bienville's house; but they soon found it entirely too small to serve all their purposes and they were given the use of a number of small houses situated a square away and on the opposite side of Bienville Street.

After the Natchez massacre the nuns were required to care for the rescued French orphans who were taken to New Orleans. This made still larger quarters necessary, and Mme. de Kolly, whose husband and son had been killed in the massacre, let them have a plantation house which was situated, as Bienville put it, "at the extremity of the city." This was outside of the Vieux Carre at the rear, on what is now the far side of North Rampart Street between Toulouse and St. Peter Streets, which, at that time, had not yet been cut through. We give the exact location because heretofore history has not recorded where the nuns were domiciled after leaving Bienville's house and while awaiting the completion of their new convent in June of 1734. The nuns remained in this plantation house for five years. Their new convent was the fourth building of brick erected in New Orleans, the third having been a warehouse which the company built in 1728.

The effect of the Natchez massacre on the province as a whole may be judged by its consequences in the Chapitoulas district, notwithstanding its distance from Natchez. The two de Kollys, father and son, of the St. Reyne plantation between Nine and Twelve Mile Points, were killed at Natchez; likewise Joseph Chauvin de Lery, the leader of the Chauvin brothers; and his son, Joseph Junior, who had been married only the year before. Louis Chauvin de Beaulieu, a brother and uncle, respectively, of these two Josephs, was sent on a scouting expedition against the Natchez in 1730 and received a wound from which he died also. His sister Barbe, and her husband, Hubert Bellair, were killed while making their way to Montreal. The officer, St. Aignet, who married Joseph's widow, was killed several years later in a continuation of the Indian war. These represent but two family connections.

Upon the recall of Bienville in 1725 de la Chaise ,the cashier of the company, was sent from France to investigate the affairs of the colony. He became president of the council and retained that office until he died in February, 1730.

In 1731, the company, weary of the whole matter and facing a number of large damage suits that had grown out of the Natchez misfortune, handed the province, and Perier with it, back to the crown. Even with the accession of orphans and women rescued at Natchez and brought to New Orleans, the census of 1732 showed a loss of population instead of a gain; there were forty fewer white inhabitants in the city than there had been five years before. As for slaves, two shiploads had arrived in each of the years 1727, '28, '29, and they now outnumbered the whites.

On March 3, 1733, Bienville reached the province to replace Perrier and once more govern in Louisiana. This proves that in some way and at some time Bienville was restored to the confidence of the king, and that his previous administration of Louisiana's affairs was approved, and the charges against him found to be frivolous.

On his way to Louisiana he had met and talked with several of his old Indian friends in Cuba and had learned all the details of the Natchez affair. Bienville deeply resented the outrages Perier and Chepart had inflicted on the Indians and the damage they had done the colony.

When the nuns had moved out of Bienville's house Perier had moved in. Bienville now wanted it back and sent word to Perier to get out. Such an official greeting deeply wounded the sensibilities of the deposed governor, and he complained that Bienville had been rude to him. But by then none cared to listen to Perier; they were too glad to see Bienville back and too eager to see Perier take ship and sail away.

Surely Bienville remembered the eighteen years between 1699 and 1717 which he had spent in making friends of the Indians and in straightening out their intertribal quarrels; on one occasion Indians had traveled many weary miles to see him and ask that he drive out the evil spirit that had brought fatal sickness into their tribe. He had begged, bought and traded for food for his own people, for the Spaniards and even the Indians at times; he had been investigated for offenses he had not committed, and

had been sent on a dangerous mission by Cadillac, who was put over him during the Crozat regime, probably with the hope, on Cadillac's part, that the Indians would kill him.

Thereafter for five years, between 1717 and 1722, his experience and judgment had been rejected while he saw one mistake after another made by the council in Louisiana and the directors in France, mistakes which cost human lives unnumbered.

After this he had been aware for two years of the undercurrent, set up by his political rivals, who wished to see him impeached at the very moment of his success in establishing New Orleans—when Indian troubles and starvation no longer threatened and real progress might be made. The king gave ear to the conspirators and recalled him to stand trial in France.

So had he spent twenty-five of his forty-five years.

Except for the joys he probably knew during his first few years as an explorer, before the death of Sauvole, Iberville and de Tonti, he might have thought his a wasted youth; such experiences were enough to ruin both the character and disposition of any but a strong man. However, the worst it seems to have done to Bienville was to make him something of a recluse in his last years.

Upon his return to Louisiana he gave his first attention to repairing, as best he might, the damage which had been done to the province in his absence; but he took the time, in October of the year of his arrival, to free two of his slaves, George and Marie, in recognition of "good and faithful service during twenty-six years." Evidently he had acquired them in 1707, while the French were still on the Mobile River, from among the first slaves to enter Louisiana through the Carolinas.

After four years he took up with the king the matter of his lands, submitting testimony and the results of surveys. This brought about his being again put in possession of his estates, or what was left of them; for we find, among the records of the Superior Council, a recommendation that he be paid "out of the first money available" for fifteen arpents frontage on the river opposite New Orleans which the company had taken for a landing. This was the same land which Pauger had appropriated, without permission, in 1721.

The surveys made at the Chapitoulas in 1737 showed that some progress, but not a great deal, had been made there during the eighteen years since the property had been conveyed to Bienville. Probably most of it had been made before the Natchez massacre and before the exodus of the Germans whom Bienville had "staked" on his property. The Canadian family of Chauvins, and their children, had spread over some three miles at the upper end. Between Nine-Mile Point and Lowerline Street of today the two tracts belonging to Nicolas Chauvin de Lafreniere, divided by what is now Carrollton Avenue, lay unimproved; they had been used for the pasturing of cattle and the cutting of timber. The plantations of the Chauvins lay above Nine-Mile Point.

*Below Lafreniere's lower line, down to the middle of the present Audubon Park, lay three concessions of six arpents each that had been acquired by Louis Chauvin de Beaulieu, who had been killed in 1730. His son was found to have forty-four superficial arpents planted to indigo, and somewhere between the present Broadway and Walnut Street Beaulieu's family had the first out-of-town residence of brick in the Mississippi Valley of which we have any record.

Below Beaulieu the seven arpents constituting what is now the lower half of Audubon Park, which had been given by Bienville to his nephew, Noyan, lay unimproved.

Below this came the plantation of Barbe Chauvin's stepson, Bellair. Barbe and her husband, Hubert Bellair, Sr., we remember, had been killed. The stepson had married Barbe's niece Catherine. Their combined plantations extended down to what is now Nashville Avenue. On the riverfront, near the present State Street, stood their modest house, which consisted of a parlor, bedroom and closet. Young Bellair had one hundred and ninety-five arpents planted in food crops, five negro cabins, a barn, a warehouse, a hen house and a pigeon cote.

Next the Bellair plantations stood the "Old House" of Joseph Chauvin de Lery and his son — both killed at Natchez.

All these properties, it will be noted, belonged to one family connection — with the exception of the Noyan strip — and this was added to their holdings later on when a young member of the Noyan family married into the Chauvin connection.

*See plate No. 6 in back of book.

On the six remaining miles of the Chapitoulas river front, lying below the properties here listed, there were but three houses and but two hundred and ninety-three arpents planted — to vegetables, indigo, rice and corn.

Carriere had cleared but not planted ninety-six arpents; de Hauterive, who had likewise planted nothing as yet, had cleared one hundred and seventy arpents.

The Jesuit strip below de Hauterive lay uncultivated except for that portion which had been Bienville's Bel Air plantation; the upper portion of their property was swampy and was used only for a cow pasture.

In most cases where clearings had been made for planting, the forest had been pushed back for a distance of two thousand feet from the river; but Bellair's planted land, one day to be a part of the famous Boré plantation, ran back three thousand feet to an arm of the Bayou St. John.

Such was the condition, in 1737, of that great section which in after years became the business and residential district of American New Orleans.

We have found nothing to indicate that Bienville was ever reimbursed for his advances to the Germans, or that he ever received any compensation for the nine-tenths of the land that lay above the one-tenth which he sold to the Jesuits. The king had ordered it to be given to those found living on it. And we have not found any evidence that Bienville was paid even for the land which Pauger held, while he lived, and which the company, and then the king, took for their uses, across the river, though the debt was acknowledged. This was known as "The King's Plantation" and was the depot at which the fresh shipments of slaves were unloaded and kept at work until sold to private persons.

Thus far the only hospitals in Louisiana were those which the king provided for his soldiers; there had never been a hospital for the poor; and now, after the disastrous years of Perier's administration, practically all the people, with the exception of a few well-paid officials, were poor. All things considered, perhaps no community in North America was ever in greater need of a free hospital than New Orleans at this time. Then a certain man died and was given official notice for the first time. Until

then he had attended to his business, kept his promises and broken no laws, thus escaping mention in the transactions of the Superior Council.

Two squares back of the parish church, and half a square upriver, Jean Louis had conducted a little boatshop; and his was one business that throve since New Orleans, surrounded as it was by water, and with bayous running everywhere, could not get along without boats. Roads were bad and horses few. Planters cut canals along their side lines and floated their timber from where it was felled to mills and homes along the riverfront. People transported their produce and supplies in boats, visited in boats, and went to church — most of the way — in boats.

So Jean Louis accumulated a little money. In 1735, when he died, the council probated his will and discovered that he had left his savings, amounting to some two thousand livres, as a nucleus toward establishing a hospital for the poor. This was the beginning of the New Orleans Charity Hospital of today, which ranks among the leading institutions of its kind in the United States.

With the boat carpenter's savings Bienville and Director Salmon purchased from Mme. de Kolly the house that had formerly been occupied by the Ursuline nuns, and converted it into a hospital which was called the Hospital St. John, in charge of the Ursulines.

Two years later they sent a memorial to the king in which they stated that as the old building could not last much longer they had decided to replace it with "a large hall of brick," twenty-five by forty feet in size, fourteen feet high, including the foundations. The new building was given the same name as the old.

Attached to this new hospital as part of its property was a slave girl named Marie Aram. Her husband, Francois Tiocou, a free Negro of Senegal on the west coast of Africa, entered into a contract with the hospital authorities in July, 1737, for the purpose of gaining freedom for her. The contract stipulated that to this end he would have to "work and exert himself for it (the hospital) and do all that he may be ordered and commanded to do . . . during the six coming and consecutive years, beginning on the first of January of the coming year, besides the remainder of the present

year, during which time he will work at the said hospital without any remuneration whatever, being fed with provisions of the country and supported as the inspector wills"—a hard contract for a free man to sign. Nevertheless he did; and six years and eight months later, on March 6, 1744, "as a recompense for the good services" which both had performed, Marie was given her freedom. All honor to Marie and her devoted husband Francois Tiocou!

When, in 1738, the parish church was repaired Bienville contributed toward the expense 9,048 livres — his share in the capture of a prize ship. As Bienville, like all other Canadians, was partial to the Jesuits, and this church was in Capuchin hands, we think this generous contribution speaks well for his broad-mindedness and public interest.

During the next year the town built its first brewery. Things appear to have been picking up again.

Though by now the Natchez tribe had ceased to exist, remnants of it had joined with other tribes that continued to make trouble for the French, and Bienville led several unsuccessful campaigns against his former friends. Floods, smallpox among his troops, jealousies, misunderstandings and delays caused these campaigns to lack in glory or in any definite evidences of sucess. For this Bienville has been criticized. But it is only fair to note that thereafter there were no more Indian uprisings in Louisiana.

Weary and discouraged, Bienville, in 1743, renewed his former requests and begged the king to relieve him of his duties so that he might return to France and end his days in peace. Bienville was now sixty-three years old.

This time the king consented, though the evidence indicates that it was more because of Bienville's poor campaign against the Chicasaws than from any appreciation of his years of tireless service to his king and Louisiana.

Few important characters in history have left less than has Bienville upon which we may base a judgment of his life and character as a private individual; his letter to the government in defense of his administration of Louisiana's affairs is an official document that hardly touches upon his emotions or experiences as a private person. We know that he remained a bachelor while the men about him were marrying women of the aristocracy, or

erent sort who had been exiled to Louisiana, wo[illegible] had [illegible] even Indian squaws. Perhaps he was too [illegible]ger in 172[illegible] His written opinions of even the better ones [illegible] Under de[illegible]siana to seek husbands, and even of some of they were, a[illegible]e care they arrived, were unfavorable. Accord- St. John at [illegible]ne only girl to whom he ever gave even passing De Ve[illegible]ne daughter of Cadillac, the civil administrator Street ne[illegible]etween the years 1712 and 1717; but the society D[illegible]eeable father was more than Bienville felt himself candle[illegible]re, and he ceased his attentions to the daughter. the b[illegible]s it may be said of Bienville that he had no private life [illegible]his one great emotion was his devotion to his brother B[illegible] and to the province they both had governed. of t[illegible]ienville was followed by the Marquis Pierre Cavagnal de [illegible]audreuil as governor in 1743. Because it is safer to judge a man by what he does than by what is said of him we will merely mention that de Vaudreuil brought to the eight hundred white and three hundred black inhabitants of New Orleans a taste of French high life that the people remembered for more than a hundred years; but as far as Amichel is concerned he left no permanent mark that can be set down as an enduring credit to him.

While he was governor the city built a number of brick residences. When the French were on the Mobile River bricks were shipped from France with which to build brick kilns so that the province might make its own bricks for forts and public buildings. No private residence was built wholly of bricks, so far as we know, until Beaulieu built his brick residence in the Chapitoulas in 1734. During the last four years of Vaudreuil's administration some forty-five brick residences were erected.

Of those first ones none remains standing today. A half-brick and half-timber house, which antedates those, stands just below the line of the great fire that visited New Orleans in 1788. It is number 632 Dumaine Street and was probably erected during the years 1726 and 1727, just before the arrival of Perier. George W. Cable, in one of his novels, calls it Mme. John's Legacy.

Whatever a man's troubles were in that day he was supposed to bear them with such fortitude as he possessed and live on until some irritated Indian or little mosquito, charged with yellow

fever, put an end to his tribulations. In 1752, had hos[illegible] French soldier determined to try another way out. P[illegible] provision- trast between Vaudreuil's new standard of life—a hard co[illegible] fact was too discouraging, and, to make things worse[illegible] nd six years and to have depressed his spirits instead of exhilara[illegible] ompense for the one day he put his bare toe to the trigger of his [illegible] was given her off the top of his head. The shocked Attorney for the K[illegible] band Francois arrested in this condition and solemnly charged with [illegible] of himself." The council appointed an attorney to [illegible] ienville con- deceased during the trial, which lasted from April [illegible] hare in the 6. The accused meanwhile disappeared from cour[illegible] Canadians, furnishing bond. [illegible] hin hands,

At last the poor suicide was acquitted because of "is broad- while drunk"—the plea entered by his attorney.

On the day of the acquittal an Indian who found himself unequal to the tax which life in French New Orleans imposed on him, and possibly encouraged by the leniency of the court in the above-mentioned case (though this is doubtful) put an end to his life too. Promptly his body was arrested, tried, and, sad to say, convicted; for it seems that in life he had not been in the habit of drinking as much as the Frenchman, and therefore his attorney could not successfully maintain the plea of insanity while drunk; so the convicted body was hanged, head down.

France, in 1753, transferred Vaudreuil to Canada to defend that dependency against the British, and Kerlerec was set in his place as governor of Louisiana.

A few years later the British drove the Acadians from Nova Scotia. Descending the Mississippi in 1755 a number of them settled the "Evangeline" country some forty-five miles west of present-day Donaldsonville.

Then the garrison of Fort Duquesne, situated where Pittsburgh now stands, knowing that it could not hold its position against the advancing British, burned the fort in 1758 and floated leisurely down the Ohio and Mississippi Rivers to New Orleans. The French barracks, from which the present Barracks Street in New Orleans got its name, were built to accommodate these men.

Now orders came from France that New Orleans must be fortified, and Bernard de Verges was chosen engineer for the

task. He had come to Louisiana with de Latour, Boispinel and Pauger in 1720 and had survived them all.

Under de Verges the fortifications about the city, such as they were, and also a little fort called St. John, on the Bayou St. John at Lake Pontchartrain, were completed in 1760.

De Verges died at his home, a brick residence on Bienville Street near Chartres Street, in 1766.

During this period the people of New Orleans were still using candles to light their homes. The wax for these was made from the berries of the myrtle tree and cost from $2.00 to $2.40 a pound.

Below the city, between Esplanade and Elysian Fields Avenues of today, lay the plantation of Louis Joseph Villars Dubreuil, Contractor for the King. It was he who had built the "large hall of brick" which became the Hospital St. John.

On this plantation, which boasted of having a sawmill, a rice mill and others, Dubreuil attempted to make sugar from sugar cane — introduced into Louisiana by the Jesuits a generation before — but his sugar, like that of other experimenters, melted and ran out of the barrels while on shipboard in transit to France.

By now the British had taken Cuba from Spain and were about to take Louisiana from France. To prevent this, Louis XV, on November 3, 1762, secretly transferred all of Louisiana to Spain.

During the following year the war between the three powers came to an end, and, in order to get Cuba back, Spain gave England Florida. France relinquished to England everything she had claimed on the east side of the Mississippi excepting New Orleans and the "island" on which it sat. This was bounded by the Mississippi and Iberville rivers, the lakes and the gulf.

This settlement of the war put Britain in possession of all of North America, east of the Mississippi River from the Gulf of Mexico as far as she cared to go toward the North Pole, except the "Ile d'Orleans." Of course, this was before the American Revolution.

France then openly proclaimed the transfer to Spain of the western half of Louisiana and the island of New Orleans.

Now, for the first time, the western limit of the British colonies was definitely set; previously she had claimed all the land

westward to the Pacific Ocean even though Spain had made settlements on the Pacific and England had not.

Spain was uncertain what to do about her new acquisition; she wanted Louisiana first because she had always claimed all the lands of Amichel and had declared the French to be trespassers; and secondly she wanted it because it would improve her claim to the interior lands above the coast.

But Spain was reluctant to enter into actual possession of Louisiana in view of the fact that the province had never been profitable in the hands of France; furthermore, her own recent management of provinces, no matter where, was making her and the inhabitants steadily poorer. No one profited except the local officials. So Spain, for the time, said nothing and did nothing.

Upon giving the western half of Louisiana to Spain and the eastern half to England, France recalled Governor Kerlerec and all but a few of her troops. D'Abadie, the director general, took Kerlerec's place. In February of 1765 d'Abadie died and no one was put in his place; Aubry, the senior captain of what was left of the French troops in Louisiana, assumed command, and the Superior Council continued to run the civil end of the government.

Straggling Canadians, who had been driven out of Canada by the British ten years before, continued to arrive in New Orleans until 1765.

By then the end of the French administration of Louisiana was close at hand, and the coast was soon to be administered by Spain and England.

The author anticipates the publication of the Spanish and English occupation, and the American period to the close of the Civil War, with a complete cross index and bibliography.

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Situated at No. 711 Tchoupitoulas St. which, in 1719 was the "Chapitoulas" road, named so because it ran from New Orleans to the camp of the Shupic-Goula Indians at Twelve Mile Point. These in turn were named for living on the Shupic-Acha, or Mud-Fish River, now disappeared at that end.

The Chapitoulas road ran before the plantation named Bel Air by Bienville in 1719. This was a portion of his estate which extended up to Nine-Mile Point. Here he sowed a half barrel of rice in 1719, the first year in which agriculture was attempted in the New Orleans district.

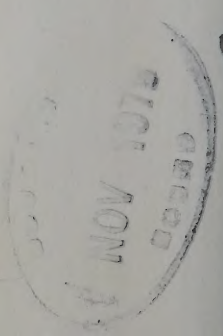
A few years later he sold this plantation to the Jesuits, who held it until 1763. They were then sold out by order of the Crown and the Bel Air plantation was bought by John Gravier who intended to promote it as a suburb of New Orleans under Spanish administration; but no promotion succeeded under Spanish rule and Gravier died before anything came of it - which was after the Americans had bought Louisiana from Napoleon in 1803; in fact in the 1820s.

It then became the "American Section", in which no self-respecting Frenchman would set foot; but it took the business away from the Vieux Carre French who condescended to do business during certain hours of the day only, and took their ease the rest of the time.

The action of the river has added five or six squares to the the front here, hence Tchoupitoulas Street is no longer the river road.

2/ 4005 C.

REFERENCE ONLY



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